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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Civilization on Wheels

MOTION in itself, we suppose, is not antagonistic to thought. In fact we have Aristotle and the peripatetic school to prove that it can be a spur to philosophy. But between the discussion of ideas "beneath the classic shades of Academe" and pondering on the ways of life as an eight-cylinder car or a Baldwin locomotive whirls the world in kaleidoscopic confusion before the senses, lies the chasm between sustained thinking and disjointed impressions. No one, so far as we know, has attempted to measure the effect of the traveling propensities of the American public upon its culture, and no one, we surmise, will be able to attain to an exact appraisal. But it should be patent to the least scientific and statistical observer that some, and undoubtedly considerable, influence is exerted upon our civilization by the fact that a great part of America is constantly on wheels. And it would be hard to maintain that locomotion has proved an unmixed blessing to the nation.

It would, of course, be harder still to gainsay its advantages. They go almost without the saying—the wider horizons of thought that [illegible] engenders, the exhilaration of spirit that comes [illegible] fresh scenes, the [illegible] of nation[illegible] [illegible] persons of distant sections call forth, the development of business that the mobility of the population makes possible. What more needs demonstration is that of the factors which make the American nation, alert, eager, ingenious, clever as it is, anything but a nation of thinkers, the fact that great masses of the people are constantly in a state of being conveyed from one point to another is not the least, if it is not the most, important.

* * *

Take our city dwellers, for instance, a class of the community which since its place of business lies close to its residence sections, and which, since great numbers of its members are presumably in too straitened economic circumstances to permit of extensive excursioning, might be supposed to be more or less unaffected by travel. What is the reality? It spends a substantial part of its hours out of the office in locomotion—in subway, automobile, trolley car, or bus—going to and from business by day, to and from diversion by night. And it spends it under conditions most adverse to thinking, under so constant a bombardment of happenings that the mind has hardly absorbed one impression before the next has jostled it for place, and rumination is swamped in the heterogeny of incident. Only the most self-absorbed and tenacious mind can pursue a consecutive line of thought under such pressure.

The very ease with which America takes to the railroad militates against a train trip being a means to mental stock-taking. As a nation it "picks up and goes" on the slightest provocation, to visit a friend in a nearby suburb, to keep a business engagement in Chicago, Atlanta, or Houston, to hear an opera in Birmingham, to spend a holiday in Florida. It is always headed somewhere, and usually is anxious to reach its destination in a hurry; while it is traveling it is generally too preoccupied to have thought except for the object of its journey, and when at home is too likely to be thinking of the next mission that will take it ajourneying to settle down to calm and reflection. What is it that makes us such voracious readers of magazines, consumers of such large quantities of light fiction, except that our restlessness counsels to the story or the article that can be read between stations or put down when the car drives up to the door? The ponderous and ponderable book goes by the board where the many are concerned not only because it is [illegible]ond their

(*Continued on page 4*

Psyche

By VIRGINIA MOORE

THE soul that has believed
And is deceived
Thinks nothing for awhile.
All thoughts are vile.

And then because the sun
Is mute persuasion,
And hope in Spring and Fall
Most natural,

The soul grows calm and mild,
A little child,
Finding the pull of breath
Better than death,

And thinks that sun is warm . . .
Five petals form
The violet, blue head
Softened by red . . .

And simulating wind,
Stronger, and thinned,
And tough to meet a blow,
[illegible]

The soul for lost love's sake
Splits the opaque,
Past Venus, past the Plough,
Much further, now:

The soul that had believed
And was deceived
Ends by believing more
Than ever before.

This Week

"Pioneering on Social Frontiers."
Reviewed by JOHN PALMER GAVIT.

"The Life of Solomon."
Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS.

"Not Without Dust and Heat."
Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT.

"Philine."
Reviewed by JAMES ORRICK.

The Road to—Palambang.
By LEE WILSON DODD.

"Keats' View of Poetry."
Reviewed by CLARENCE DEWITT THORPE.

"The Blue and the Gray."
Reviewed by HENRY WALCOTT BOYNTON.

"The Coming Age and the Catholic Faith."
Reviewed by THEODORE MAYNARD.

Next Week, or Later

"Builders of the Bay Colony."
Reviewed by RANDOLPH G. ADAMS.

The Prosecution Rests

By JOHN A. CLARK
Michigan State College

IT takes all kinds of commentators on books and authors to make up an interesting critical universe, at least. These middlemen of the literary world are, for reasons not always crystalline clear, usually divided into two sharply defined groups: the reviewers and the critics. At any well-regulated literary gathering, where the quality of the table talk is exceedingly distinguished, the reviewer is certainly never spoken of very flatteringly, if at all. He is with the goats. The critic, on the other hand, however much you may disagree with him, is given the homage to which his talents and his supposed cultural and intellectual background entitle him. He is on the side of the gods and belongs with the elect in Heaven. The reviewer, loosely speaking, is a sort of parvenu among the Parnassians, a journalist or a clown or a hack; only a jockey on the literary race track, riding stalking horses one day and thoroughbreds the next. He is even without benefit of amateur standing.

From what I have just said, one might reasonably conclude that I have been reading Arnold Bennett on "The Expert Book Reviewer" or taking my cue from "The Free-Lance Writer's Handbook." But such is not the case. There are a few reviewers, no doubt, who actually read a book before broadcasting their report of it to a curious book public hungry for fillips, Bennett's flip ingenuousness to the contrary. And when we find an editor saying: ". . . but practical writers by no means monopolize the field, and reviewing is an excellent start for a young writer. . . .," we realize that he is concerned only with "telling how," and is making no attempt to see book reviewing steadily or whole.

It is all too easy, I think, to fall into the very uncritical habit of taking so-called criticism far more seriously than it deserves, and in discounting the intrinsic value of reviewing on sight. Such an attitude derives much of its validity from the general triviality of the reviewer's subject matter, and the cheapness and venality implicit in much of the reviewing itself. But granting the utter worthlessness of two-thirds of the current reviews, what do we find when we examine the increasingly large body of writing parading under the banner of Criticism or *Belles Lettres*? We find, I believe, a very small percentage of first rate criticism. This insistence upon the essential and practically universal integrity of criticism, while comparatively safe, is nothing if not misleading. This is not an apology for reviewers; it is only a plea for saner criticism of criticism.

* * *

To settle down—just what is a reviewer? and how does he differ from a critic? Mr. Henry Seidel Canby, who should know something about it, finds it impossible to determine where criticism ceases and reviewing begins, and decides to draw a scientific parallel, differentiating between pure criticism and applied. The latter kind is called reviewing. The distinction being still a bit obscure, he makes the best of a rather trying situation by concluding that good criticism is applicable to all literature, while good reviewing is simply good criticism applied to a new book.

John Riddell, a very retiring, astute, and engaging reviewer, disavows any pretension to the rôle of critic. "We book reviewers," he says, "haven't the space or the liberty to salute Absolute Truth." He admits that they write labels and ca[illegible] the benefit of various reading publics [illegible] "state their [illegible]

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pressionistically as possible"; that that is their job, humble though it may be.

Mr. Riddell is refreshingly candid, which is something, but he does not supply us with the whole story. Several years ago there appeared in the *New Republic* an anonymous article in which a reviewer of long and presumably high standing broke down completely and told everything. Forty years of reviewing, instead of giving him confidence in his ability to do justice to all concerned, had only served to open his eyes to the futility of the whole business. He had been able to "sell" his opinions to others but not to himself. A finished technique, fluency, vivacity, and an I-know-what-I'm-talking-about air might satisfy a gullible clientèle, but he knew these things for what they were. Although his ruthless soul searchings had their interest, the most valuable part of the confession was his attempt to differentiate between the critic and the reviewer. The critic, he found, has backgrounds, standards, taste, and perspective. He has no prejudices—not malignant, anyway—and personalities do not influence his judgments. The reviewer, on the other hand, is simply an off-brand critic, working under difficulties, and suffering from any number of ailments, contracted for the most part in the swamps of the contemporary. Where the critic has standards, backgrounds, knowledge, the reviewer has only favorites, little or no perspective, and a background conspicuous for its holes. Unlike the critic, he is forced to write about books as they issue hot from the press, and writes better about bad books for obvious reasons. He also has the journalist's knack of feigning an enthusiasm for things often distasteful. Thus this reviewer, turned State's evidence, went on, sparing no one, not even himself.

It seems, then, that this writer made a distinction of degree, whereas Mr. Canby thought it one of kind. Whether it is a question of bananas and oranges or only a matter of bananas ripe and bananas rotten, I shall not attempt to decide.

* * *

How does reviewing today compare with reviewing of the last century? Mr. Canby is of the opinion that reviewing in America "has had a career by no means glorious." In the early part of the nineteenth century, when we showed unmistakable signs of coming out of our swaddling literary garments, reviewing as a trade or profession just wasn't. We had very few strictly literary journals, and those few were like so many wee, faint voices completely drowned out by Indian whoops or the ringing echoes of the pioneer's ax. England continued to dump her critical goods over here in stultifying profusion; and so between an unfavorable literary *milieu* and a harsh, dictatorial, and quite long-winded remote control of our literary policies, American literature had its back to the wall. Aside from an occasional critical chirp from Lowell or Poe or Fuller, all was silence until the next cargo of admonition and censure arrived from abroad. What native criticism we had seldom related itself to indigenous contemporary letters. There was relatively little being written in the first place, and in the second, what there was was sadly wanting in quality. To pay serious critical attention to such trivial material was felt to be a waste of time and talent.

Needless to say, our reviewing was carried on in the last century, largely—as it still is—by hacks. Our brightest critical sparks were hammered out in off moments by men who were preëminently poets, essayists, short story writers, or novelists, who considered book reviewing in the same light in which Arnold Bennett considers it today. But one thing at least may be said for American reviewing during the last century: it never approached the reviews in the British periodicals in the matter of length or sophistry. And though an occasional reviewer for the *North American*, or later the *Atlantic*, outwinded his English cousins, he was not typical; besides, these exceptions did not begin to occur until after the Civil War when books began to multiply and reviewers had not yet learned the happy knack of lumping seven or eight together, and dismissing each with a pregnant, well-turned epigram.

Mr. Canby has also made the startling discovery that reviewing in those early days of our literary youth "was carried on in small type, in the backs of certain magazines. Most of it was verbose and much of it was worthless as criticism." How we have improved all that. Today, to find the reviews in our leading magazines, we need only turn to the advertising sections where they are—a great many of them, by the way—very appropriately placed. Even the *Review* prints at least half of its reviews in large type. And as to the application of Mr. Canby's second point to current criticism: while it is true that the larger share of it is singularly free from the taint of pomposity, it is equally true that most of it is utterly worthless as criticism.

The new era in reviewing, as Mr. Canby and others have remarked, had obscure beginnings, but undoubtedly traces its parentage back to modern journalism, which did not do exactly right by its child but nevertheless provided it with ways and means of getting on in the world. Reviewing remained in this pampered state of worldliness until the "intellectual weeklies" came along and lifted it out of the gutter. Ultimately, they transformed the prodigal into a gentleman and a scholar. But the job was not yet done. A man may be a gentleman and a scholar and still be a snob or a special pleader. A more catholic outlook was needed. It may be that this utopian state of affairs is now an accomplished fact; it may be—only a hopeless ideal.

* * *

A reviewer is a bundle of relations—a person of many responsibilities, constantly approximating justice to the book, the author, his audience, or to himself at the expense of the rest. He finds it increasingly difficult to keep from losing his critical way in the labyrinth of this complex network. Most reviewers ignore the problem altogether, resigning themselves freely to their moods of the moment. The recognition of the existence of a problem is in itself something; perhaps as much as we can hope for. No one, I suppose, will ever be able satisfactorily to allocate these unescapably intricate relationships.

We might as well begin, as we shall probably end, by raising a few questions. First of all, what is a reviewer's relation to the book? Although we may with grace and good sense discount heavily Milton's rhetorical statement regarding the relative value of a man and a good book, yet, by the very nature of things, a reviewer's first duty is to the book. The book must stand or fall on its own merits or defects, and the reviewer will be judged by the quality of his reactions to it. If he allows bias or personal feeling to enter in, his usefulness suffers. But does he owe nothing to his public, to himself, or to the author, you may say? Yes, but his obligations to the other three are decidedly subordinate. As in the case of reading for pleasure, we do not say, I believe I'll read for pleasure this afternoon, and then deliberately pull a "pleasure" book from the shelf. Reading for pleasure is a more subtle, a more unconscious, and a more organic process than that. Likewise, a reviewer's relations to himself, to his audience, and to the author are even more elusive of precise delineation. If a reviewer brings intelligence to the discussion of a book, a goodly amount of sensitivity and critical insight, and aims at fairness, then at one stroke he has done right by all concerned.

When the penitent reviewer whom we have already shrived admits that he is a "literary moonshiner, distilling from corn of long and painful growth a little glassful of critical hard liquor meant to be gulped down at a single swallow," I am ready to plead guilty to the charge of over-simplification, even though he makes no allowance for the gulf frequently intervening between intention and achievement. And when Archibald MacLeish accuses the "critiquins" of jumping with malicious zest upon these products of "long and painful growth," concerned solely with showing themselves off to good advantage, and not at all averse to using cruel and highhanded means for securing that end—I begin to feel sorry once more, and fail to rally until someone suggests that perhaps Mr. MacLeish is merely defending pygmies against the assault of pygmies.

After all, I think, we must return at last to the book itself or confess that our chief interests lie elsewhere. Even L. A. McDonald's lament that critics and reviewers are unreliable, prejudiced, and hyperanalytical, and that perhaps the reading public, the charwomen, knowing more about a book's performance, are safer guides, leaves me cold: she is not belittling criticism as a whole; she is merely tilting at bad criticism. It is not the problem of a reviewer's value to his readers; it is simply the problem of seeing a book as something human and living, as something more than a bar of soap up for chemical analysis.

The reviewing industry, if we choose to believe its severest critics, is, like Hollywood or democracy, rotten to its very core. Perhaps the crying need of reviewing at the present time is decentralization. The majority of our reviews are written by New Yorkers; and the books they review are, for the most part, written also by New Yorkers. The inferences to be drawn are obvious: either log-rolling or mud-slinging will very likely be the general order of the day.

Passing on, we run into the goose-steppers, the watchful-waiters, who take no chances but endeavor, if possible, to see what the others are going to say before venturing into print.

Next we encounter an even more obnoxious pest, the reviewer who spurns mass critical opinion and is determined to be different, at the expense, as a rule, of being absurd.

Then follow the exhibitionists, the springboard reviewers, or, as some one has dubbed them, the egofrisky ones who use book reviewing as a pretext for telling us about themselves, panning some other book or author, or writing an informal essay on the joys of reading—very delightful at times, but also very irrelevant. Closely allied to the exhibitionists, but not exactly blood brothers, are the unbridled impressionists who always know what they like if not always why. Next we come to the inveterate blurb writers, the superlative mongers, the darlings of the publishers. George Jean Nathan once said, and there is no telling how many times he has repeated it, that the chief fault of American criticism is its warm and undiscriminating hospitality to second-rate striving.

Last, but by no means worst, are the academic specialists who confine their reviews, largely, to studies bearing upon their own particular fields. As a general thing their critiques are scholarly, and they doubtless try to be fair, but on occasion the animus of professional rivalry or scorn takes hold of them.

* * *

Now that we have the different types of reviewers fairly well catalogued, what scandal can we dig up against their technique, style, vocabulary—yea, even their grammar? As far as technique goes, they stand acquitted. They write on the whole with facility and grace. But in the matter of vocabulary they do not come off so well. Robert Littell, in a series of articles entitled "Vivid and His Pals," made out a damaging case some time ago against practically all of the critics and reviewers, including himself, regarding their loose and maddeningly indiscriminate use of words and phrases. He raised several disturbing questions and cited any number of embarrassing "horrible examples." His very delightful papers boiled down to this: Do reviewers know what they mean when they call this story "moving" or that character "alive," or does anyone else?

Nearly any reviewer could read the Littell indictment without giving up very much of his self-respect, but Margaret Lynn's "Concerning Reviewers of Sorts" is something else again. If he can weather her savage barrage and emerge unscathed, he is a very fine reviewer indeed. She not only assails the current reviewer's careless and oily manhandling of respectable words, she casts blighting aspersions on his ability to write, spell, punctuate, or even use decent, schoolboy grammar. And it is not the groundlings that she damns, either, but the higher-ups who should know better.

Having roughly indicated a few of the occupational diseases which far too many members of the reviewing fraternity seem to be down with, ranging all the way from cultural bankruptcy to orthographical insolvency, let us call James Norman Hall to the stand:

> . . . Four of them (literary critics) would be quite enough to review all the books worth reviewing which are printed in the course of one year. One might be stationed in Tahiti, one in Iceland, one in the Sahara Desert, one in some mountain fastness of the farthest Andes. There, unharassed, unhurried, free from the depression which comes from being encompassed by multitudes of books, they might render service of real value to the world.

The Prosecution rests.

"How did I learn to write? I didn't," says G. K. Chesterton in an article in *John O' London's Weekly*. "I am still learning to write, and by the only method. You learn to write by writing and writing; but you must take each word by itself, examining it as you would examine a criminal, and by avoiding ready-made phrases. There is no harder work than learning to write. It is so hard that it prevents general 'education' in the customary sense of the term. But the novelist, who has to deal with everything in life, has a great privilege. He is permitted to have no exact knowledge of anything in life—except his craft, and not always that."

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Graham Taylor: His Book

PIONEERING ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS. By GRAHAM TAYLOR. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1930. $4.

Reviewed by JOHN PALMER GAVIT

THE Grand Old Man of the social settlement movement in America has written his memoirs. Just past eighty—he was born May 1, 1850—he is still going strong, and for aught anyone can see may live to write an autobiography. To find it in this book you must read much between the lines, for he is more interested in what he has seen and participated in than in himself, even as participant. The book is perhaps the more valuable for that, because it is a history rather of a period than of a person. It is a period, now ended or ending, to whose character and accomplishment Taylor himself has contributed possibly more than any other one person—the period in which the Protestant churches of America abandoned the old, purely individualistic, theology and began to take account of society as a whole, of the tremendous importance of social environment in determining human destiny.

Beginning his Christian ministry in quite conventional fashion, in a country crossroads parish at Hopewell Junction, Dutchess County, a few miles back of Fishkill, N. Y., without anything in his upbringing or training to account for what was then an unusual point of view, he almost immediately began to take note of the influence of social, political, economic factors as conditioning his pastoral activity. His first serious attack was upon the ancient system of rented pews, among people who regarded their ownership as that of real estate, as clearly private property as a farm or a horse. He got himself into hot water by assailing local corruption in politics. As he says:

> It required breaches in the peaceful order of local life to impress upon me the sanctity of the common welfare, and the obligation of the ministry and the church to have a community consciousness. . . . Through all the after-years I learned that a minister is only a man ministering, and that the measure of one's manhood measures his ministry.

Called after seven years of struggle to incarnate this spirit, to a city pastorate in Hartford, Taylor saturated the new church with this idea, building out of a dying entity one of the first of the great "institutional" churches, ministering to the whole life of the people. Very soon he was summoned to inoculate the outgoing ministry with this virus; called to a chair of "practical theology" in Hartford Theological Seminary. So successful was he in communicating to his students his own vision of the church's duty and opportunity that he had to move on presently to Chicago, to become the first professor of "Christian Sociology." It was a new and catching expression; just then Albion W. Small was beginning in the University of Chicago the creation of the first department of sociology in any university. It is all an old story and taken for granted now, but it was innovation then. From that day to this, Taylor has been sending out into city and countryside young men to preach the gospel from the social point of view.

Even as he had done in the country and in Hartford, he forthwith inserted himself and his family life into that of Chicago. He went even further; it was an essential of his strategy to take up residence in one of the congested wards of the city, renting a big house left aside by the great fire in what most would call a "slum," but in what was only a densely packed community of preponderantly well-behaved working people. Here, about his own family as a nucleus, he gathered the group of like-spirited folk and created the social settlement since famous under the title "Chicago Commons." Of its purpose he says:

> We accounted to our neighbors for our presence in these simple words: "We have chosen to come to live and work here to be all we can to the people and to receive all they can be to us as friends and neighbors; to share with them what to us makes life worth living; to assume the full obligations and claim all the rights of citizenship in a community with whose interests we identify ourselves, whose conditions we share, and for whose happiness, material welfare, political freedom, and social progress we try to do our part."

I am able to sense what he drove at and did, because I lived in Chicago Commons for five years; I saw this man in daily action there as I had seen him before in the Fourth Church at Hartford whence he summoned me. But that is also why I cannot tell whether the average reader will find in this book all that I see in it. Perhaps I read into it more than is really there. Seeing it as I do, however, I believe that the period which it covers cannot be fully understood without such an interpretation of its coming about as Taylor has contributed.

Obviously, he and his associates could not participate actively in the life of their neighborhood without quickly discovering that it was no watertight community, isolated from the larger one of which it was a part. All their accomplishment was conditioned by the fiercely-flowing currents of the city as a whole, as the city was affected by those of the state, as the state was affected by the national life, as the nation was concerned in the life of the world. Hence such a pastorate as Taylor conceived must function in view of all the ebb and flow of life among men everywhere.

So, it was unavoidable that such a man, attempting to describe his own activities over a period of half a century, must write of all manner of things affecting what he was trying to do, including his effort to inspire other men, and women too, to similar ministry in the communities to which they might be called. Hence this book deals with many aspects of life, more particularly in the Chicago where he has been a virile figure since the early 'nineties. For nearly thirty years he has contributed to the Chicago *Daily News* a weekly column, with extraordinary freedom to say what he would. Victor F. Lawson, publisher of that newspaper, once described him as "the conscience of Chicago." And meanwhile he has traveled pretty well round the world, keenly alive to the human values in what he saw.

Alexander Pope, who had much to say on the reviewers of his day, and who in his "Essay on Criticism" wrote:

'Tis with our judgments as our watches,—none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own.

With something like distaste for the job, and almost as if it were an afterthought, Taylor writes a bit of history of his upbringing, trying to account for himself. He doesn't do it very well; I doubt his capacity for self-appraisal; he is not given to introspection. Probably it is just as well—had he been less objective he could not have ranged so far or done so much. And there is if you seek it a woof of personality and inner experience giving meaning to the whole.

Every minister and social worker ought to read this book; teachers of American history and sociology will, I think, find it indispensable. It is not propaganda in any ordinary sense; it is the tale of a man who all his life has been trying to mediate between extremes and to interpret men of widely differing views and interests to each other. At the core of it is Taylor's own idea of *religion as relationship*; of the minister's duty and opportunity to rectify relationship "toward brother man and Father God." As he puts it:

> I have found "relationship" to be the one term interpretatively interchangeable with "religion." I sought and first used this term to interpret religion to men who claimed to be hostile to it. I told them that every one of them had a religion of his own, whatever he might call it; that it consisted of his own ideals of his relationship to God and fellow-men; that the Christian religion is essentially the ideal which Jesus had of relationship to God as father and to men as brothers; that only in so far as any of his followers actually practice those relationships and strive to realize them more completely are they really Christian; and that whatever rites and ceremonies, sacraments and creeds, may express and impress religious experiences and aspiration, religion itself is relationship to God and Man.

Aside from its expression of ideas, theories, and aspirations, and its rather slender thread of personal confession, Taylor's book is a narrative of great aspects of life and development and of people, himself among them, living in one of the most momentous periods of modern history.

A Universal Faust

THE LIFE OF SOLOMON. By EDMOND FLEG. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1930. $3.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS
Author of "Clash of Angels"

WITH thousands of lives of heroes and heroines, kings and knaves and politicians pouring from the presses in the last decade, biography has gone to diverse ends. Many fine books have been written to seek through the facts the esthetic truth of a life. Others, less devout, have used mere factual truth or even ancient rumor to shape designs in sensation. Some have been splendid as story, some valuable as research, and a few have been works of art in the field of history. But in all the decade, in all the vast number of biographies, very few have attained to anything approaching the poetic truth and beauty of Edmond Fleg's "The Life of Solomon."

This is a book so bound up with poetry in every line of it, that, exquisite as it is in the translation of Viola Gerard Garvin from the French, the reader is afraid that something unapparent but beautiful has been lost in taking it from the original language of the writer. In this day of biographers, Mr. Fleg writes in the high tradition of the poet chronicler and his work is chronicle and poetry of genius and power. Solomon's life, as he follows it through Scripture and history and legend, is the familiar, but eternally stirring, poetry of man rising to grandeur only to end in such dust as the wind blows away.

Wisely, Mr. Fleg has adhered to, or rather used in modified form, the language of the Old Testament poetry by and about Solomon, particularly in the Song of Songs where is told the love of the king in his youth for Abishag, the Shulamite, who loved a shepherd and could deny a king. The story itself begins with the coming of that altogether desirable Abishag to warm the chilling bed of the dying King David, though the book opens with the birth of Solomon, born in God's forgiving of the sin of David and Bathsheba. The story goes on, after the Biblical pattern, in the violence of Solomon to remove his brother Adonijah out of the way to the throne. It comes to the pomp of Solomon, arisen from petty Jewish king to Oriental potentate, in his power half abandoning the God who has given him wisdom to make alliances with strange nations and strange women and strange gods. There is then the kingdom groaning under the weight of Solomon's grandeur.

* * *

Into this scriptural story, Mr. Fleg has infused with art and learning the best of the multitude of legends which have grown up among other peoples about this Solomon. Woven into the fabric of the story are the myths of the Arabic story tellers, of the legend-makers of Ireland, of India, of Ethiopia. This is a Solomon who had domination over the demons of earth and sea and air, over the birds and beasts of air and field. It is a Solomon who fell from power and grandeur to the ditches of Israel, from surfeit to starvation, from well-fed court wisdom to the bitter but peaceful wisdom of a man who has suffered greatly. And Solomon becomes not a king of Israel alone but a universal figure, "a Faust," as Mr. Fleg found in the multitude of legends, "at once Hebraic and universal, in whom life, as it widens and increases, at length sums up the whole of human experience."

The book is written in a heavily but beautifully decorated prose. Many undoubtedly will find it too rich a verbal diet but for such as like long poems, decorated not only with adjective and metaphor, but with poetic story and fable and incident, the book will be a happy discovery for, prose though it is, it sings throughout with the rich rhythm of its closing lines:

> Now, while he thus made supplication in his last prayer, a hand took his hand without touching it. And seventy thousand steps led his footsteps, without brushing against

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him, to the holy Ark, in the innermost depths of the Holy of Holies.

And, behold, he went down below the Ark. And with him a sword went down. And at the sword's point a drop of gall grew green.

He went down; he went down. And with him, in his going down, went thousands of eyes lighting his way.

He went down, he went down. And out of the silence beneath him came up the sound of beating that beat and beat, strongly and yet more strongly.

And, behold, in the depths at last, Solomon stood upright upon the corner-stone of the world, where the heart of Adam thundered with the thunder of its beating.

And he raised his hand, with the four jewels of the ring, which bore the name of the Eternal. And all the demons ran to him, and cried:

"At thy service, at thy service, King Solomon."

Then the King of Peace gave commandment:

"Build ye the Temple invisible!"

And so soon as he had said this the drop of gall fell upon his lip. And, standing upright, he died.

But the demons think that he yet liveth. And, under the ring uplifted on the hand of Solomon, carving justice from unrighteousness, and in war graving the image of peace, from century to century, from generation to generation, even to the end of days, they build, in spite of themselves, the Temple of the Messiah.

Chiefly about Ships

NOT WITHOUT DUST AND HEAT. By Weston Martyr. New York: Ives Washburn. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by Basil Davenport

IT would be a thousand pities if this book were to miss one of the readers born to be delighted by it because of its rather inappropriate title. As one of Captain Bairnsfather's Tommies cheerfully remarked in the rigor of a Flanders winter, "Thank God there are no mosquitoes," so one consolation among the horrors of a small boat when things go wrong (or, I suppose, of a tramp steamer?) is that there is generally no dust. And "Not Without Dust and Heat" is a book of short stories chiefly about ships.

Mr. Martyr can write about ships. He can convey their witchery and their deviltry, the way in which small boats, especially, can put one through agonies of discomfort, fatigue, and exasperation and then by one hour's coquettish complaisance win one's whole heart again. Perhaps the pleasantest stories in the book are those of small boat sailing like "A Prelude to Enslavement," "A Little Sail," and "A Golden Calf." In these Mr. Martyr shows an infectious enthusiasm which is one of the most winning qualities an author can have, and in them, as everywhere, vigor and a keen humor. His humor broadens into irresistible farce in "A Savage Island," in which a returned explorer finds that a lifetime spent among the outposts of the empire has left him entirely too soft to face the hardships of a casual caravanning trip in England, in May, with an average rainfall.

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But these stories, enjoyable as they are, are not so valuable as the tales of tramp steamers and the tropics. Mr. Martyr can also write of sailors, and of soldiers and other men of their hands, with a sympathy that reminds one of the late C. E. Montague's short stories of the war. Once or twice, in reading either of these authors, one may feel that the fictitious narrators are a little unconvincing in their absolute obliviousness to danger, a shade self-conscious about it, as in "A Drug on the Market." But this is perhaps carping, and in any case applies only to one or two stories in the book. Certainly "A Sleeping Draught" and "Sea Lawyers" could hardly be better. At his best, Mr. Marytr makes use of the callousness of his characters with great effect, as in the bitter "White Poison" and the grim "A Contact with Reality." This last is the greatest story in the book. It begins with what seems an overworked situation, the young man who fears he is a coward cutting himself adrift in the South Seas to make sure; but whereas in all the other stories that begin so the hero is brought to a triumphant finish, Mr. Martyr's character finds, in a hideously painful manner, that he actually is a coward. His soul's tragedy is told by a man who has long ago drowned his unresisting soul, and has no idea what he is relating; he sees only the physical torments, but the reader perceives them as only a background to the exquisite spiritual pain. "A Contact with Reality" is a masterpiece.

Mr. Martyr, it will be seen, has an unusually wide range, and whatever he does he does well. "Not Without Dust and Heat" is a book to have.

Amiel

PHILINE. From the Unpublished Journals of Henri-Frédéric Amiel. Translated by Van Wyck Brooks. With an Introduction by Edmond Jaloux. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1930. $3.

Reviewed by James Orrick

HENRI-FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL is indeed becoming, as M. Edmond Jaloux says, a legendary figure. Most legendary figures are known largely at second-hand, and in Amiel's case this is to a great extent unavoidable. Matthew Arnold—to whom the majority of English-speaking readers owe their knowledge of Amiel as French readers to Edmond Schérer and M. Paul Bourget—noticed the fact that of the 17,000 pages of the "Journal" on which his fame rests, the greater part remained unpublished. This was in 1888, or earlier. Some forty years later, M. Edmond Jaloux in his introduction to the present volume, points out that in spite of the three recent volumes of M. Bernard Bouvier, the "Journal," which he more precisely reckons at 16,900 pages, is still more or less "unpublished." Most of those who know Amiel at first hand at all continue to know him by the fragments originally published in 1883 and translated into English by Mrs. Humphry Ward. The Russian translation was made by a daughter of Tolstoy at the request of her father who, having been much impressed with Amiel as a religious thinker, wrote an introduction in which he compared him to Marcus Aurelius, Pascal, and Epictetus.

Amiel appeared, indeed, to be a man learned, intelligent, charming, and, as Arnold noted, a critic of a rare talent. And yet the whole was somewhat vague and watery. It left the feeling of a *vie manquée*, "the typical example of the man with a sick will," as M. Jaloux says. But, the latter declares,

> if we did not have Amiel's "Journal" no one would have supposed that he suffered from this strange illness. I mean, that Amiel never manifested this semi-powerlessness in his active life. . . . Amiel lived a patient and laborious life as a professor; he was for a long time director of the Conservatory of Geneva; he travelled, he wrote two or three volumes of verse. . . . He was devoted to many things, not with all his heart but to a degree practiced by few. . . . Consequently, without the "Journal" all those who knew Amiel would have considered him an active man.

And Amiel himself writes in his "Journal":

> It is the feminine side of my nature that appears here, the side a man hides with a sort of shame and embarrassment. It is the account of my moral vacillations and weaknesses throughout an inglorious period. In a word, it is the truth but it is not *all the truth*; it is one aspect, a partial section, but not the fundamental plan of the building.

If this allowance must be made for the entire "Journal," it is all the more necessary to make it for any selection from the "Journal." The extracts brought together here, however, are all connected by their bearing on the *liaison*, if such it can be termed, of nineteen years' duration or more, of Amiel and the friend whom he called, among other disguises, Philine; and each entry is quoted in full, even where the greater part deals with other topics. In this way we have a particularly representative picture of Amiel over a considerable period and in a relationship of fundamental importance. And it must be confessed that Amiel remains, after all, a disappointing man.

The story of Philine is a curious one. She was one of many women friends who, at one time or another, were ardently devoted to Amiel and many of whom made him almost frenzied offers of marriage. Philine, however, was the only one of the number with whom his relations did not remain entirely platonic, and even in her case M. Jaloux, though he is not entirely convincing on this point, considers that Amiel dismissed physical love after one experience. At any rate, Amiel very soon resumed an entirely platonic attitude, and for a period of years debated whether or not to concede to the unhappy Philine her wish of becoming his wife. In the end he did not marry her, for the apparent reason, surprising in a superior man, that she was not acceptable to Genevese society. This seems, however, to have been only a kind of excuse. The real reason was that Amiel was always afraid of making up his mind.

"You no longer know what it is to form an important resolution and fulfil it," he tells himself with the frankness which is one of his greatest qualities. . . .

> You have detached yourself from everything only to indulge yourself more in yourself, to elude every command, to avoid all constraint, to spare yourself all effort. Your idol is abstention, resignation, irresponsibility. Your horror is entangling yourself, enslaving yourself, provoking a tragic fate by determining your future through a definite and irrevocable decision.

This state of mind was not entirely due to timidity; it was partly the result of a spirit of independence, partly the product of an over-refining intelligence:

> What is abominable in practical life is, first, that cases are always special, entirely new, and defy general categories; next, that one's fellow creatures form only a poor judgment of these cases; and, finally, that one feels more responsible than enlightened oneself.
>
> Presence of mind, that acts quickly and well, is neutralized in me by the fear of forgetting something in the list of possibilities. So that with me immobility springs from a desire to act rightly and without mistake. Only perfection satisfies me. That is why I hold back.

Hold back, he did from Philine until it was too late; and in the end he concluded "that a marriage is not advisable unless it is irresistible."

The "Journal" of his indecisions which Amiel has left behind is very nearly unparalleled for its self-revelation. "Like Montaigne," he says, "I would rather be understood than overrated." And like Montaigne, he has furnished us with the means of understanding him.

There remains to speak of the translation by Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, which, on the whole, reads like an original work, although there is, here and there, a strange apparent literalness, which would seem to indicate that Homer has nodded. Is "gleaming worms," for example intended to represent "*vers luisants*"?

Much of the "Journal" would be richer, too, if the editor had made some attempt at elucidation where Amiel, in recounting the relations of his daily life, merely gives a string of initials. When the name of a Pictet, a Michaelis, or a Rochemont does chance to appear, the interest is enhanced by that much. On the whole, there is a distinct tendency to monotony in Amiel's personal life, in spite of its psychological interest, although to use the word "Bovaryism" in connection with him, as M. Jaloux does, is highly misleading. For it remains apparent that the real emphasis should be placed, as it was by Arnold and by Tolstoy, on Amiel, the thinker and critic of ideas and of human nature.

Civilization On Wheels

(*Continued from page* 1)

interests but also because it is without their convenience. How many a hurried man or woman, having thought to solve a mental problem or read a book of length or profundity upon a train, is disappointed of his intention, and finds himself instead of sunk in thought divided between a little sleep, a little reading, and a great deal of window gazing.

> Ay, now, I am in Arden: the more fool I. When I was at home I was in a better place; but travellers must be content.

Letters of the greatest interest to Wagner enthusiasts were published recently in Germany. They were addressed to Mathilde Maier, who died in 1910, but a special clause in the will of Fräulein Maier precluded their being made public until the death of Cosima Wagner. This condition having now been fulfilled, they have been edited by Dr. Hans Scholz.

These Wagner letters, affectionate but never passionate, extend over the years 1862 to 1878.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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The Road to—Palambang

By Lee Wilson Dodd

Once on a future time not long ago
Before the end of wars, or ever we
Forsook the serpentine seraglio
To cross the undiscriminating sea—

Aphgar, the pirate, whetted a new blade
To carve a harp of crystal. Then he sang
The twenty-seven songs the sirens made
Below the sapphire rocks of Palambang.

THE above stanzas were composed in sleep, or perhaps in that odd twilight zone when one is passing from a sort of semi-consciousness into complete slumber. I am not given to this method of composition; indeed, with a single minor exception as a young man, this is the first time in my fifty-one years that such a thing has happened to me. I have never been subject to "strange psychic experiences." For a writer, and inveterate rhymer, I believe I may add that I am a fairly well-balanced person—too well-balanced, no doubt, for my own imaginative good. I smoke, I take an occasional drink, when I can get one that I am not afraid of; but I use no other habit-forming drug save my morning coffee. Forgive these details. I wish to make this account of a somewhat freakish experience as accurate as possible.

Poetry may no longer be so important as it was, but science must be served; and I hereby affirm that in this paper, granting the usual limitations upon human accuracy, I am setting down the facts as to the above eight (I cannot help feeling, though I produced them) rather beautiful lines.

I had been playing a quiet game of contract all evening at the house of a friend. When I arrived at the house I had found my host and hostess and Mr. and Mrs. R (we were all old friends) busily searching through four or five anthologies. They were engaged, they explained, in trying to select a simple poem of eight lines for the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R—. The child had been told by her English teacher to choose such a poem for herself and learn it by heart, and she had appealed to her parents for aid and comfort. Mr. R—, who said it would fall to him to teach the child the poem before breakfast next morning, was very firm about those eight lines. A quatrain would be too short; anything longer would be too long. Finally, all hands aiding, " 'Tony O,' " by Colin Francis, was selected from Mr. De la Mare's delightfully personal anthology, "Come Hither." Then Mr. R—, giving us his ironic blessing, departed, and the rest of us settled down to our game.

I returned home just before eleven, carrying with me—a loan from my hostess—"The Last Blackbird," Ralph Hodgson's second exasperatingly slender collection of his verse. Something should long since have been done to induce Ralph Hodgson to write more, just as something should long since have been done to induce—oh well, no matter for the name, you may choose your own!—to write considerably less. After some chat with my wife, who had not been with me, over the evening's talk and the evening's game, I got into bed with the Hodgson book and read it through. The singing loveliness of the Hodgson lines was murmuring me into sleep. I turned out the light. The last of the longer poems in the book, "The Vanity of Human Ambition and Big Behavior," is a highly fantastic irony, lyric in movement, and star-powdered with odd, unearthly sparkles of beauty. It tangled itself into a wambling revery that was on the borderland of dream. When, at such times, does one veritably "fall asleep"—?

And then, somehow, the above eight meaningless lines at the head of this report drifted in upon me—and woke me up. I roused, broad awake, and happily smiling. The lines were running themselves over and over in my head; and at last, to be rid of them, and also because they amused me, I got up, fumbled through my clothes, and found my pocket notebook and pencil; then, without bothering to turn on a light, I jotted the stanzas down. Writing in the dark is a singular sensation. I wondered if the lines would be even partially legible in the morning. . . . Then I fell into bed again and went fast asleep, sleeping peacefully all night.

When I woke in the morning I had forgotten the whole incident. It was only recalled to me by finding my pocket notebook and pencil lying on a chair by my bed. At once the whole thing flashed back, and I was able to repeat the eight nonsensical lines without referring to the notebook. However, the lines in the notebook, though drunkenly scrawled, were legible enough and corresponded exactly with the lines as I had recalled them.

So much for the peculiar genesis of a decidedly peculiar composition.

Let me now, very briefly, make some attempt to trace origins for the seemingly fantastic combination of images that enters into it. I cannot of course be certain of anything in the following notes; I can only say that the interpretations as I give them seem satisfactory to me.

I believe that the dream-poem has eight lines because it had been impressed upon me that the poem for Mr. R—'s little daughter must have just eight lines, neither more nor less.

* * *

Once on a future time not long ago
Before the end of wars . . .

My friends and I, while playing cards (you may judge of the scientific precision of our play), had discussed at some length a drama given a night or two before at a local theatre. We thought it a very bad drama indeed; but that is neither here nor there. The one point to be noted is, that it was a war play—an extremely inept example of pacifist propaganda. We were all, in a sense, pacifists at the card table; but not, we hoped, merely sentimental ranters against war. We believed that even pacifists should be realists and have a certain intelligence.

* * *

—the serpentine seraglio . . .

I am at a loss here. I can only suggest that there was a scene in the war play, modernistically stylized, in which Red Cross nurses and hospital assistants and doctors danced a drunken snake-dance through streaming rain shot through with star-shells and flashes from the guns. It may—or it may not—have been that. The typically Freudian symbolism suggests itself. I bow to the erudite, and pass on.

* * *

—the undiscriminating sea . . .

A wonderful phrase! I wish I could write like that when awake!

But I am reasonably certain that the *sea* washed into my dream from the concluding stanzas of Ralph Hodgson's poem, "The Last Blackbird."

In that poem the poet informs a personified Nature that mankind has all but destroyed the beauty and magic that She had put into the world. There is only one blackbird left, and he will soon be finished off.

—Then Nature, rising, stood:
"The chase is over; yon last bird is free.
Before I give new beauty to the wood,
How say'st thou, poet, to a wider sea?"

She looked above: small as a pigeon's wing
A cloud came up and crost the blackbird's tree.
She said, "How say'st thou if yon blackbird bring
To wash my world, a deeper, wider sea?"

And, obviously, this wider, deeper sea would not have discriminated between the just and unjust; there is not even a suggestion of an ark.

Aphgar, the pirate, whetted a new blade
To carve a harp of crystal . . .

There is a lot of elusive and, I must admit, doubtful stuff to be dealt with here.

That last long poem in Hodgson's book, the one on Human Ambition and Big Behavior, contains several strange beings remarkably like Aphgar, the pirate (Crim, *Githar*, John of Teflis, for examples), although Aphgar himself does not appear in it. I have never to my knowledge met this gentleman before. With my family I was motoring in Europe for several months last year, and a friend has suggested that, with my notorious love for odd words, I may have been unconsciously impressed by the advertisements of "Agfa Films"—which are made, I believe, in Germany. It is possible, though I can hardly credit the connection. "Githar," of the Hodgson poem, probably pushed himself forward and was somehow transmogrified.

But why did Aphgar whet a new blade to carve a harp of crystal?

Family matters are involved here and must be mentioned.

In the first place, I have a daughter who, not content with the piano, wishes to learn the harp. She had just returned to boarding school from her spring vacation, during which she frequently besought us to buy her a harp. She had, if I may say so, rather harped upon that harp, and the matter was still before the family council. In the second place, I have a son, who had just received from his grandmother, on his thirteenth birthday, a large, keen, formidable jack-knife. I may as well confess that I feared, and still fear, the worst from that jack-knife. Thirteen, as a number, has a doubtful reputation, and thirteen is certainly the preferred age for bruises, broken limbs, chopped fingers, and slashed arteries. . . . It is, at any rate, my theory that something of all this may have entered into the above romantic lines: although more cautious scholars might still be tempted to refer them for further study to Mr. John Livingston Lowes, if only I were a sufficiently dead and famous person.

The twenty-seven songs the sirens made . . .

"What songs the sirens sang," doubtless, from old Sir Thomas Browne. But why the precise number "twenty-seven"—? I am enormously intrigued by the factual assurance of that number: and, after due revery, I offer the following explanation.

My partner and I had won the first two rubbers at contract, both of us holding extraordinary hands, and the score then stood 26-0 in our favor. Naturally, a great to-do was made over this; it was for us the high-spot of the evening—for we were a good deal less fortunate later on.

Well, it can hardly be proved, yet I am convinced that that line would have read "the twenty-six songs the sirens made"—if only the metre had permitted of it. Truth, in poetry, is but too apt to yield, is it not, to the exigencies of metre and rhyme? That is, perhaps, one reason why so many scientists are not a little annoyed by poetry.

—the sapphire rocks of Palambang . . .

Yes, I know beyond possibility of error where "Palambang" came from:

I once wrote, and even had produced one Holy Week in Baltimore, a satirical farce, in which one of the characters returned inopportunely to civilization from — Palambang. I remember choosing Palambang from the East Indian map because of the grotesque sonority of the word. It is a word I much like the sound of; it stimulates my imagination, and invariably amuses me, even as Chimborazo and Cotopaxi are held in special favor by a certain Georgian English bard. I find, however, on consulting my maps again, that Palambang should be spelled Palembang—which, to my ear, is not nearly so fantastic a word; and the dream-alteration in the spelling was probably due to that very reason, if reason it may be called.

It remains to question why the "dream-work," to employ a picturesque term from Freud, has endowed Palambang with a set of sapphire rocks, below which the sirens sang their twenty-seven songs. There is a geographical difficulty here. The town of Palambang, or Palembang, Island of Sumatra (if one must be accurate), is "a large place on the river Musi, with 50,000 inhabitants (2500 Chinese), extensive barracks, hospitals, etc., a mosque (1740), considered tomb of Alexander the Great." It is difficult to imagine sirens singing even three or four songs below the sapphire rocks of an inland river-town like that! But of course the poetic reference to Palambang, with the three internal a's, had no such crude earthly connotations. And those sapphire rocks had anything but a geographical origin.

My daughter, who desires to play the harp, was given a ring on her last birthday with a small amethyst in it. When she returned home from boarding school she revealed to us the fact that a piece of the amethyst had chipped off, unaccountably; and she suggested that she would like us to replace it, as soon as possible, although she would much prefer to have the amethyst replaced by a small sapphire. After more or less family confabulation, which need not concern us here, the request was granted and the thing was done. Not, however, that those sapphire rocks might not have been considered as self-justifying; "the sapphire rocks of Palambang" is a beautiful phrase, and every beautiful phrase is self-justifying, no matter how inherently absurd.

But indeed, as you may long ere this have gathered, I am inordinately proud of the whole poem! I hope I may ever be moved to dream another one-half so good.

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BOOKS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Keats in Foreign Eyes

KEATS' VIEW OF POETRY. By TAKESKI SAITO. To which is prefixed an "Essay on English Literature in Japan," by EDMUND BLUNDEN. London: Cobden-Sanderson. 1929.

THE LIFE OF JOHN KEATS. By ALBERT ERLANDE. Translated from the French by MARION ROBINSON. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1929. $3.

Reviewed by CLARENCE DEWITT THORPE
University of Michigan

"SHAKESPEARE would stare to see me there," wrote Keats on being invited to a party at Olliers "to keep Shakespeare's birthday." Keats would himself stare, I think, to see the steadily growing list of books being written in his honor, and at none more, perhaps, than at the two latest additions—representing as they do cultures so widely separated as the French and Japanese. But, as Keats once truthfully remarked, "The world has one great human heart," and he himself had the power, to a degree possessed by few who have lived, to touch that heart in deep and sensitive places. The almost simultaneous appearance of two important, sympathetic studies from practically opposite sides of the world demonstrates this fact anew.

Of the two, the Japanese book is by far the more significant, both in intrinsic value and in its implications of Keats as a world poet. The French, particularly in such a tribute as M. Maeterlinck's upon the occasion of the 1921 anniversary, and in such an important biographical study as Lucien Wolff's "Life and Works" (1910), had previously shown their capacity to understand Keats; but, although in the "Keats Memorial Volume" eleven out of a total of twenty-one contributions from foreign countries came from the Orient—India, Persia, Arabia—, Professor Saito is the first to speak for Japan.

M. Erlande's "Life" is an excellent thing of its kind. If short biographies are again to come into fashion, it is to be hoped that all may be written in the spirit of this one. M. Erlande has achieved all the interest of romantic biography—the Fanny Brawne love affair helped immensely in this—without descending to its faults. He is too concerned with an accurate presentation of Keats as the poet and man he was in the life to indulge in fiction or guesses. Working chiefly with biographical materials already at hand, supplemented by his own thorough knowledge of Keats's prose and verse, he has executed a compact and authoritative portrait which will both stand the test of rigid critical scrutiny and most admirably serve the needs of the general reader. The value of the book as it comes to us in English dress in enhanced by the presence of J. M. Murry's graceful introduction; whatever of Keats Mr. Murry touches, he illuminates.

Professor Saito's essay is more for the scholar. Originally written as a doctoral dissertation at the Imperial University of Tokyo (where, incidentally, as Mr. Blunden tells us in his introduction, there is an active and productive interest in the English poets), it bears the imprint of a finely mature mind well adapted to the tasks of critical scholarship. I have called it an important book, and it is that in spite of the fact that Mr. Saito's basic thesis is admittedly no longer new. His interpretation of Keats as a seriously reflective poet much occupied with the problems of life and art has been advanced both in England and America, and is now rather widely accepted. But in specific emphasis, there is here much of the flavor of a fresh point of view. The Oriental mind obviously has something new and enriching to bring to the study of English poetry: a distinctive background and literary tradition, a unique religious and philosophical point of view, an unashamed enthusiasm, a taste tending towards the classical. This Longinus-like accommodation of a near-romantic enthusiasm to analytical judgment and clean taste, now nearly extinct in the English and American academic world, is a timely suggestion as to the possibilities which lie in a union of the scholarly and the esthetic approach.

Except for J. M. Murry no other critic has given Keats so high a place in poetry. To Professor Saito, Keats "is in a sense the culminating point of the English Romantic poets." Almost "all the Romantic elements are found in him as if he were the focus of the genius of his period." Keenly aware of Keats's power as a sensuous poet—the close of Chapter I shows this particularly—Professor Saito feels, nevertheless, that his unique greatness lies not here, but "in his neo-idealistic poetry and view of life," his humanitarian ideal, his resolution to know and express the truth of things.

Professor Saito's main topic is Keats's poetic theory. Poetry has its birth in imaginative experience. To experience reality to the depths is to experience *beauty*. Hence arises the relationship between truth and beauty—it should be observed, and this is a comment on the Oriental mind, that to Professor Saito this relationship presents no difficulty whatever: "The word 'truth' here . . . is used in the sense of reality, and in Keats's opinion . . . a thing of absolute beauty is at the same time a thing of absolute reality." The mission of a poet is "to seize the reality of things and to sing of it with a selfless spirit."

Poetry, Keats thought, should be spontaneous and inevitable, but it must also be rich in the highest thoughts. It should be worded in accordance with "the native quality of the mother tongue"—though the commonplace and trivial are to be discarded. "The excellence of every art," declared Keats, "is its intensity," and intensity, says Saito, "is the parent of concentration and suggestion." It is easy to understand why Professor Saito, trained in the traditional Japanese forms—the *hokku*, with its seventeen, and the *uta* or *tanka*, with its thirty-one sounds—should attach much importance to the qualities of concentration and intensity. His discussion here is especially useful in its implications of a fresh mode of attack upon a crucial problem in poetics.

Professor Saito's essay should be read. Because of its enthusiastic tone it may be open to some distrust; but the unbiased reader will find it one of the most closely-reasoned studies of Keats yet made. There are one or two minor errors of fact. One is an inaccurate quotation from Sidney Colvin's "Life"; another occurs in remarks which involve the date of "Hyperion, A Vision": "In 1818 . . . Keats was still delighted with the 'luxuries.' . . . It is in Hyperion that Keats for the first time treats with severity of the 'giant agony of the world.' . . . 1819 is the *annus mirabilis* of Keats's life." "Hyperion," as I think the author must know, was certainly begun in the fall of 1818. But such lapses are rare and are of small note in comparison with the genuine merit of Professor Saito's excellent book.

Elijah Reincarnate

DOWIE: Anointed of the Lord. By ARTHUR NEWCOMB. New York: The Century Co. 1930. $3.50.

THIS generation must almost have forgotten Dowie, the reincarnation af Elijah, who founded a new religion (like all founders, he only professed to restore true Christianity), established a new city for the pure outside Chicago, got millions from his devotees and kept the suckers biting for a long time by the old army game of paying dividends out of incoming capital; who brought a host of crusaders to save New York and was a ludicrous failure because his voice was lost in Madison Square Garden; and finally was deposed from leadership of his own church because of mismanagement aggravated by eccentricities of a rather scandalous sort.

It was a fantastic and fascinating personality; and one cannot help wishing that Arthur Newcomb, who was closely associated with Dowie during his great years in Chicago, had written a straight biography instead of a "slightly novelized" adaptation. He may have had sound reasons for making this look like fiction rather than fact; but the fictitious element adds nothing to the story and much space is wasted on irrelevancies such as the details of Dowie's trip around the world. No treatment could altogether spoil the story, but Mr. Newcomb has fallen far short of making the best of it.

Walnut and Marble

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY, or, WAR IS HELL. Revised and Edified by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY from an Old Script by JUDSON KILPATRICK and J. OWEN MOORE. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1930. $2.

ELSIE DINSMORE ON THE LOOSE! By JOSIE TURNER. Drawings by ELDON KELLEY. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by HENRY WALCOTT BOYNTON

THIS is one of the successes of Mr. Morley's gay experiment at the Old Rialto in Hoboken. As sponsor and edifier of the entertainment, he is a little plaintive about the fact that it scored only fifty-two performances, whereas its immediate forerunner, Boucicault's melodrama "After Dark," had totted up a grand 437. He believes that it was just as good a show, but everything outside happened to go wrong. The stock market went to pieces, and half the theater public stayed at home. The weather was cold and the audiences were too small to keep the house warm "by sheer human radiation." By the time money had been collected to mend the boiler it was too late.

But its producer touches lightly on all this. He prefers to recall the fun everybody had getting up the play. We understand from the gloomy novels of the theater that there is a particularly seamy side to the business of rehearsing, but if this producer and his crew ever suffered annoyances, discomforts, jealousies, or what not, they vanish under the genial backward glance of the entrepreneur. His people, we gather, are all by nature and habit Good Companions. This play, he says "was a joy to do and a joy to remember . . . deserved better luck, and we preserve it in this form for our future use."

Its source is odd and interesting. The original romantic war play it is founded on, "Allatoona," was written by the gallant cavalryman and adventurer General Kilpatrick, as a souvenir of a certain Georgia campaign in which he played no mean rôle. J. Owen Moore's part in the play is not made clear. Apparently he adapted the Kilpatrick script and the Morley hand has dealt freely with the adaptation. Mr. Morley's problem, I suppose, was to keep the color and substance of the original while subduing its worst romantic exuberances. And there are witty touches here and there, sly jests barely under the surface of the dialogue, of whose source we are sure. The object of the jests, is the sentimental fustian that passed for the heroic in the Civil War era. But to a reader, at least, the effect of the performance is not altogether uproarious. This is a restoration not a burlesque, and the hand of the restorer is touched with indulgence and even with tenderness for an age of haircloth patriotism and black-walnut romance.

"Elsie Dinsmore on the Loose" deals more rudely with the well-known futilities and banalities of the Victorian period. It is straight burlesque, quite ruthless, and there is rather too much of it. The idea is amusing enough. The famous and virtuous Elsie is transplanted bodily to our own time and put through her paces in various modern settings. Her father, Mr. Horace Dinsmore, is a man about town, a middle-aged buck of the '60's who finds himself at home at a costume ball or a night club of the '20s. He preserves the moral patter and the hypocrisy of old without missing a trick of the modern social joyrider.

Elsie, at fourteen, has been brought up according to the old tradition, by a governess who is a dream of propriety. "I have fed the goldfish and emptied the ice-box pan," said she with characteristic gaiety to Mammy Chloe, who was following her nursling about the house, to prevent the child's overtaxing her strength. "And now, Mammy Chloe, if you will fetch the green enamelled watering pot, which dear, kind Mr. Travilla presented to me, I shall water the rubber plants." Upon this innocent and idyllic existence crashes dear Papa's sudden determination to introduce his daughter to the world. Elsie's outward self is transformed, the pantalet becomes the panty, she learns to absorb her cocktail with surprising ease and excellent results, she becomes at home in resorts of pleasure and fashion. But everywhere she carries with her unblemished her maxims and her niceties.

The Epilogue (headed by two poetical mottoes) is worth quoting:

> And now, with this happy anniversary of the birth of the sweet floweret, who had blossomed into this world of sin and sorrow just fifteen years before, bringing joy to all hearts, let us leave our little heroine, older and wiser than when we first met her, though no less pure, innocent and devout. . . . We may be sure that whatever betide, whatever the future may hold in store for Elsie and her distinguished-looking father, they will always abide steadfastly by the principles which have guided their faltering steps in the past. As for kind Mr. Travilla, can you not guess, dear reader, that it will not be long ere he speaks of the emotion budding in his good heart?

Catholicism and the Future

THE COMING AGE AND THE CATHOLIC FAITH. By WILLIAM BARRY. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE MAYNARD

DR. WILLIAM BARRY, since 1907 Canon of Birmingham, and since 1923 a Monsignor, has long been known as one of the leading Catholic scholars. As theologian, historian, and critic he has been equally distinguished; and his novels are by no means negligible. But he is in his eighty-first year and the fact is apparent only too frequently in this book.

The first twenty-three pages of "The Coming Age and the Catholic Church" were written in 1911. A decline in vigor is painfully apparent throughout the remaining two hundred pages. They possess, indeed, mellow wisdom, and a learning that has penetrated to the marrow of the writer's bones. Moreover, Monsignor Barry's style cannot be anything but graceful and charming. But he is very old and very tired. For this reason, many of the later chapters, slight as they are, come to an abruptly huddled close.

His book has so excellent an idea that I hope some younger man will use it again. Monsignor Barry could hardly have written it himself when he was younger; the World War and the settlement of the question of the Pope's temporal sovereignty had to occur first. Now, despite all the difficulties of her situation—and, in fact, largely because of those difficulties—the Church has a unique opportunity, of which she will most certainly take full advantage, though quietly and without hurry. Protestantism, bankrupt as a spiritual force, seems doomed to extinction before long. And the old challenge of the rationalist has lost its force, since the Church is now almost the sole defender of the validity of reason. Even birth control, which Monsignor Barry notes to be the chief remaining stone of offense, is likely to result very greatly to the advantage of Catholicism. For while many thousands drop away from the Church on this account—under the combined pressure of human passion and inhuman economics—nevertheless the preponderant Catholic birthrate will do much more than balance these defections.

The Communist explosion in Russia—which we must expect to see followed by similar explosions elsewhere—may well in the long run of the world's history be of aid to the Church. Catholicism at all events has never been identified with capitalism (which is, on the contrary, one of the byproducts of the Reformation) or with industrialism, which, as the Bolshevist experiment has shown, finds a more congenial bedfellow in communism even than in capitalism. The Catholic alternative to both systems is to be found in the *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII, though it is stated there with cautious moderation and in its most general terms.

This summary, though it takes in a little more than Monsignor Barry has put into his book, as it also leaves out a little, will, I think, be acceptable to the author. He is able to sing his *Nunc Dimittis*; to conclude his book with, "And now, the world's great age begins again, Italy and the Pope are free." But younger men will look upon that culmination as the opening of a new chapter.

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SOME RECENT FICTION

Always to Be Blessed

PENDING HEAVEN. By WILLIAM GERHARDI. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1930. $2.50.

BLESSED with the gift of splendid silliness, William Gerhardi has written in his "Pending Heaven" one of the merriest books of the year, full of sophisticated ridicule of the Bohemian fringe of writers and the grand passions which, by their own report, decorate their lives.

The comedy of Mr. Gerhardi is not limited to any single phase of hilarity. His work combines a sharp, chaste wit with the broadest of burlesque and he has shaped his satire about story and incidents which make a perfect vehicle for the purposes of laughter. The story is that of Max Fisher's confident search for Heaven on Earth. "Unless I have that girl I shall be cheated out of my paradise," says Max many more times than one. Generally he gets the girl but Heaven is not so simple. It is always pending in another girl.

Instead of Heaven, the impecunious Mr. Fisher "with the Shakespeare forehead and the eyes of a doe" acquires in addition to an unsuccessful marriage a snug harem of three ladies: Phyllis, the sensible; Sheila, the unconventional, and Helen, the matronly harpist who talks about her art and, with equal pretension, about her "wonderful youth." These ladies, who live with Max in the South of France and the North of Africa, and other ladies not admitted to the high status of the harem, while bringing Max no paradise, fail to destroy his eternal expectation of Heaven in a lady's arms. At last there is the one, an American, beautiful, and—better still—rich, who he is sure could make his Heaven. Tragically for Max she refuses to become a party to a plan for a general wedding on a North African Mohammedan basis. Instead she marries that Victor Thurbon, writer, for whose literary work Max has scant respect but from whom he took Phyllis back in the days of their literary brotherhood. So heaven and God become a mockery and Jesus himself enters without friendship into the fantastic metaphysics of the broken Max and into the comic plan of Max's life and Mr. Gerhardi's novel.

With his perfect sense of the ridiculous and a complete lack of literary piety for self-conscious artistic groups, Mr. Gerhardi has written his most amusing comedy in his story of the "Kennington Movement." This movement is no less than the beginnings of an artistic tradition which Max and Victor make of their joint occupation of a flat in Kennington with Phyllis, who takes dictation and love with equal good nature and facility. Their difficulties with each other, with Phyllis's two lovely but noisy children, with servants and with plumbers, increase to the culmination of the literary movement, when Max basely deserts Victor, taking the jointly-loved Phyllis off to the South of France to a house rented by Victor. Alone through a freezing Christmas in the flat, Victor pays a laundry bill left by Max and thinks bitterly of the "Kennington Movement." Sadly he thinks "how future examiners, anxious to devise a snag for unwary undergraduates, might pose the question in a paper: 'Describe briefly the cause and effect of the Kennington Movement.' And they would be hard put to it to describe it."

In the same high spirit of gaiety all of the characters are conceived and presented in action. Max, himself, with his conceit, his sad certainty that he is not understood and his faith that he is a poet sensitively recoiling from the existing state of things, is a perfect central figure for the comedy. The three ladies drawn in variant attitudes of mind toward themselves and their ineffectual Sultan add to the comedy of protagonist Max. Yet it is perhaps in the drawing of the minor characters that Mr. Gerhardi has best shown his genius for comedy. Cæsar Zeitz, the retired confidence man who is Sheila's guardian, and Monsieur A. Horse, the good bourgeoise French horse-trader, are fine figures in respectability. Most amusing of all perhaps is that fierce, Gallic, voluble Captain Bernard, the harem's neighbor, who, despite reports that he threw his first wife into the sea, is violently devoted equally to his cowering new bride and to his phonograph upon which he plays sentimental music, listening and weeping.

This happily ridiculous story and its mad characters serve Mr. Gerhardi perfectly for his sparkling dialogue around art and ideas. The witty dialogue within the burlesque comedy makes "Pending Heaven" a book that has in it both fine smiling and deep laughing.

Picaresque Adventures

THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF JULIO JURENITO AND HIS DISCIPLES. By ILYA EHRENBOURG. Translated by USICK VANZLER. New York: Covici-Friede. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by CLINTON SIMPSON

EHRENBOURG attempted a man-sized piece of writing in this book—a broad satire aimed at certain national, or so to speak, official characteristics of European countries and America (including some minor satirical thrusts at the war, politics, propaganda, the Soviet Government, etc.). In fact, it seems that for one book—even so long a book as this one—he attempted too much, more than he could carry out. Parts of his book are excellent satire—biting, fresh, derisive. Other parts, including much of the extravagant nonsense which binds the narratives together, fall pretty flat. The book is worth reading for what is good, and superlatively good, in it. But it is uneven in execution, and there are many episodes we should willingly have done without.

The plan of the tale is roughly that of a picaresque novel. Julio Jurenito, an international rogue, without convictions but with an immense fund of casual commentary, travels through Europe picking up disciples from every nation. He travels with them from one country to another, during the War and afterward, ending finally in Soviet Russia after leading them, with all his ribald mockery, a merry chase. Here, "fed up" with civilization, and not having found the human being he sought, he deserts them—oddly enough, with a last message compounded of idealism and faith in mankind's future. As a whole, his career seems contradictory and meaningless; he stands, perhaps, for the complete modern disbeliever and anarchist.

It is in the characters of his disciples that Ehrenbourg's satire strikes most deeply. Each of these is not only a character, but also a national caricature, symbolizing certain aspects of each country and embodying, in their exaggeration, the author's criticism of each. Mr. Cool, the American billionaire, is a masterly portrait of a corrupt business man, establishing profitable brothels all over Europe while agitating for the suppression of vice, and selling shells engraved with Bible quotations to all European nations while serving on peace commissions. M. Delhaie, the French undertaker, is a mockery of the French neo-classic spirit, with his sixteen different grades of funerals, and his vivacious insistence that each class of person shall be properly buried. His zest for life, his continual chatter about his mistress and his garden, his love of good food and his pink pills, are a delight.

Schmidt, the efficient German, and Bambucci, the lazy Italian, are grotesques of an equal pertinence. Somehow Aisha, the Senegalese, and Spiridonovitch, the old-fashioned Russian mystic, do not have the same quality of being close to life.

The exploits of these strange companions in international politics, in business, and in love are always amusing, sometimes hilariously so, in spite of the bitter reflections that are constantly just beneath the surface. Ehrenbourg has courage; in Mr. Cool and M. Delhaie he has produced two figures of Gargantuan proportions and great satiric strength. It is unfortunate for the effectiveness of his book that it is so loosely knit.

The Jewish Theological Seminary of America has just acquired a number of rare books and manuscripts, through purchase and donation, which makes the seminary library the largest and the most notable Hebrew collection in the world, according to its new catalogue issued recently.

What Price Art?

THE FORBIDDEN ZONE. By MARY BORDEN. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by CLARICE AIKEN

TO have walked through "The Forbidden Zone" with Mary Borden is to have witnessed the most agonizing features of the world war. In this group of sketches, stories, and poems—impressions of the war carried back to peace and civilization from the hospitals along the front where the author served as nurse—Miss Borden asks us the question that so many other war book writers have asked: was the world war a mockery of God by the people or a mockery of the people by God?

For all its concentrated horror and pain, this series of studies is one of the most poetic contributions to war literature. But if the author's purpose was to abolish war in writing this book, she has by its very success achieved just the opposite effect. Her reiteration alone, "It won't do to think of this, or of that, for I'll break down," is a magnet. The fact is, it won't do for her to sentimentalize or idealize the sufferings of her pitifully wounded, for by making them dear to the reader's heart she helps to build up that great illusion of war glamor and romance. And to future, inexperienced generations, war is an unadulterated composition of glamor, romance, and heroics.

We quote a section of "Rosa," the story of a peasant who tried to commit suicide. Before going to the operating room, the surgeon is asked if he will extract the bullet that seems to have entered the brain. He replies, "But certainly." "And he will live?" "Perhaps." "And what then?" "He'll be court-martialled and shot, Madame, for attempted suicide." The nurses agree to neglect their patient so as to bring about an infection and death, in which case he will be saved execution. The head nurse feels that this man was not afraid of being killed but afraid of not being killed. His hollow, broken-hearted "Rosa! Rosa!" tells her that this Rosa has somehow been lost to him and that he is not afraid of facing death but of facing life. Now, by documenting the heroisms of these "pieces of men," some of whom Miss Borden nurses back to health so that they may go into the trenches again, she gives to war a value that obliterates its futilities and tragedies, — qualities which evaporate all too soon in the memory of man.

⁂ ⁂

In "The Regiment," a sketch of soldiers marching into a village square to be decorated before being sent back to death, the author has achieved, by a deliberate use of the repetitious and the monotonous, a curious effect of rhythm which synchronizes with the tramping of feet. She describes an aeroplane thus: "High it flew. It flew high." A grim, naked effect is obtained by the simple device of asking and answering questions, primer fashion. "The Captive Balloon" is practically the only sketch in the whole book that relieves, by its charm and brevity, the sombre hue of this particular group. It might have been addressed to a child, so simple and stiff-jointed is its idiom. Miss Borden's extraordinary sense of onomatopœia must be acknowledged. A poem entitled "Where is Jehovah?," which assumes the literary form of the gospels, constitutes an atheist's prayer, a cry of despair.

The most graphic story in this volume, "In the Operating Room," is far too intense, too unsparing. Here and there one finds breaches of good taste, as for example, that ghoulish scene in the story called "Blind," when a nurse mistakes an amputated knee (which the surgeon had cut and experimentally placed in a saucepan) for a ragout of *mouton* for the *casse-croûte*! Whether such passages "come off" depends on the reader's visceral stamina, of course. One should be prepared for these candors if one picks up a war book.

Despite the interval of time between the Armistice and the date of writing, one feels that these war impressions were done at fever pitch, that they consumed their author. Scientific detachment played on the heart-strings of a woman but could not deaden the sound of human shock coming from within. With a poet's gift of rhythm, beauty, and feeling, Miss Borden has taken the rawest materials of life and turned them into a work of art. But what price art?

Where History Repeats Itself

THREE SCORE AND TEN. By ALEC WAUGH. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by STANLEY WENT

GREATLY daring, Mr. Waugh has chosen to write a novel that invites comparison with a masterpiece. Nobody knows, of course, what place in English letters will ultimately be given to Galsworthy's "Forsyte Saga" but so far as contemporary opinion can tell it has the qualities that make for permanence. Hence, when Mr. Waugh selects as his theme the father-and-son motive through three successive generations he must be content to be judged by the standard of a putative classic. By that standard it must be admitted that he falls short of success. Galsworthy gives us the whole sweep of an age, as one epoch develops into another, the mid-Victorian melting into the late Victorian, the "naughty 'nineties" preparing the way for the brief era of jolly King Edward, and that in turn sliding imperceptibly into the halcyon pre-War days when the reign of King George was still young and the world looked very good indeed.

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There is nothing of all this in Mr. Waugh's story, and the author might fairly retort that he didn't attempt it and that this was not what he wanted to say. But the point is that he ought to have wanted to say it, that you cannot tell a believable story of father, son, and grandson without reproducing the atmosphere of the age in which each lived. When Hilary went to school at Fernhurst, the world—not even just Fernhurst—seems to have been exactly the same sort of world as it was when his father was at school thirty years earlier and when his son was at school thirty years later; and when Hilary and his bride were running about London in the 'nineties playing "the kind of bridge that all over England was being played that night" (by the way, when exactly was it that bridge established itself as the universal card game?), their London might equally have been the London of today or of the day before yesterday. Even the South African War is passed over in complete silence. Indeed, when it comes time to introduce the Great War, Mr. Waugh exclaims: "Europe had known its turmoils and its revolutions. There had been Balkan problems; there had been alarmist articles in the Press; but for a hundred years England had been at peace." Surely a peace which had been interrupted by the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, and the South African War, to say nothing of a dozen minor conflicts, can only be called relative.

⁂ ⁂

Mr. Waugh's main interest is in the psychologic relations of father and son—to show, apparently, how inevitable is conflict between the two, no matter what course they may pursue or what affection binds them. Old Conway Cardew let his son Hilary have his own way in everything, denying him only the early briefs that might have looked to his law partners like nepotism. Hilary, judging his father wanting in parental prudence, swore that he would make a better job of it with his own son Godfrey—and when the war came dragged him out of the army as under age and refused consent to an imprudent marriage. So Godfrey also found his father wanting, and when his own son came, etc., etc.,— though in the end Mr. Waugh takes pity on frail humanity and effects a reconciliation between Hilary and Godfrey over the baptismal font of the new generation.

Plus ça change plus ça reste la même chose is the point that Mr. Waugh makes, but he would have made it far more effectively had he presented the unchanging emotions of humanity against the changing background of external things.

England's best seller at the moment is a Blue-book, the report of the Simon Commission to India.

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A Letter from France

By Abel Chevalley

SOME books, though published here, are more promptly reviewed and perhaps more widely read in America than in France. Such are the "Rediscoveries" of your continent by eminent European writers. Their frequence has, since the war, become appalling. It is not my business to bring coal to Cardiff. A book of which you have read a cable review almost before I was aware of its existence, needs no introduction from my pen. I take it for granted that Paul Morand's "New York" and his "Champions du Monde" are well known on your side of the Atlantic. He is one of the few writers who can, in the same breath, at once "describe" and "interpret" reality. He makes you feel both the shape and the substance of his subject. He is intensely true to his job. He likes life, and is lifelike. And, among other things, Paul Morand may be considered as one of the best portrait painters of this age.

The view of America as given over to over-production and crowd tyranny; mechanism and excess of energy; automatism and spiritual conformity; collective and material progress accompanied by individual stagnation; mercantilism and infantilism;—all these articles of belief, fostered by Americans and afterwards trumpeted by Europeans, seem to me rather hackneyed and narrowly futile. It is all too simple to be true. It looks deplorably "facile." Unrelieved by an artistic gift, either of heartfelt and violent sarcasm, or of cool, lifelike, and many-sided delineation, the vision of America that results from so many books recently published in Europe is more mechanical than the general mechanism which it is meant to stigmatize.

Paul Morand's books are saved from that boring effect by his extremely intelligent and comprehensive outlook. His plot in "Seven Champions" is somewhat artificial and schematic. As a story-builder, he does not seem particularly at ease. As a story-teller, I find him inexhaustibly fresh and invigorating. George Duhamel's deep-seated indignation against the cult of Mammon, his almost excruciating concern for the future of humanity are, for his French readers, the redeeming feature of "Scènes de la Vie Future." This last book of his is not merely, nor mainly, a pamphlet against the States. In the eyes of Duhamel's public, it is rather an almost Swiftian picture of what awaits us all if we continue to move at the same pace towards the standardization of human interests.

Neither Duhamel nor Paul Morand professes to be "scientific." I have recently read a ponderous American book on France, "France: The Nation of Patriots," resulting from a well-endowed effort of Coöperative Research (save the mark!). It claims to be founded on scientific methods and leaves the impression to be made either for or by fools. Perhaps a latent incompatibility of purposes in the conception of the book made it impossible to avoid contradictions and superficiality. But no whitewashing can prevent such collections of undigested "facts," naïvely bracketed, connected by undefined verbalisms, packed together without any scale of values, from throwing ridicule on the bodies that sponsor them. I do not in the least recriminate against the picture of France presented in that mass of crude information: it is innocuous, because babyish. I only pity those responsible, and deplore the waste. Would you believe, for instance, that "Frenchmen constitute a distinctive nationality"; that "France, after all, is a country in the continent of Europe, almost completely surrounded by foreign nationalities"? Did you suspect that "in respect of language, it is the French national language (and no other, mind you, not even 'any local speech or dialect') which is read, written, and studied" in primary schools? A whole staff has been employed for two years, making such discoveries. Have you read Laski's chapter on "Foundations, Universities and Research" in the "Dangers of Obedience"? It is well worth reading. A collection of facts, even relevant, is not scientific when their significance is undetermined, and their relative value unapprehended.

Jacques de Lacretelle has been awarded Le Prix du Roman by the French Academy, but he was almost from his birth a potential member of the Company. That potentiality is now augmented. He is one of the very best among our novelists, though he does not seem to have much developed since "La Bonifas," a really great book. A white flame of intellectuality devours his other gifts. You will find in his "Retour de Silbermann," just published, another study of the romantic, proudly humble, and hauntingly race-conscious young Jew who "could not find his place in the United States though they have room for all the other sorts." Silbermann is a typical example of those persons (not all Jews), whose only felicity lies in the happy conviction of being unhappy. There are nations, provinces, families, and spiritual groups of that type. Misery is their food, drink, and opium.

Those who like a good, rich, juicy historical hypothesis should read "Si Napoléon en 1914 . . .," by J. M. Bourget. It is a series of dialogues in Hades between Napoleon and Marshall Foch, written by a military expert who is also an excellent writer. Napoleon seems rather at sea, sometimes . . . No wonder. If Marlborough had been in Napoleon's place in 1814; if Gustav-Adolf had been in Marlborough's place before 1714, if Cæsar, if Alexander, if Ramases the Great had been in one another's shoes, boots, or sandals in their respective times, I do not know what they would have done. But it is probably easier for their ghosts to understand their respective difficulties than for Napoleon to visualize Foch's task.

"P. C. de Compagnie," by Constantin Weyer (Rieder), is one of the very few war books recently published that stand rereading. It is sincere. It is not a piece of pacifist propaganda. Though concealing none of the horrors of war, it avoids that pandering to the taste for dirt and cruelty which is at the bottom of so many recent successes. It has the directness of a document because it is a document. It has been lived. It is also an indictment of the worse sort of militarism, that which fosters incompetence, sloth, and laziness by wearing the mask of democracy.

The idea of "Jim Click ou la Merveilleuse Invention," by Fernand Fleuret (Gallimard) is original and interesting; its development as cleverly incredible or incredibly clever as you can wish. Suppose Nelson dead before Trafalgar, and a glorified speaking Robot to have taken his place. Would the result have been different? And in what degree? There is a human interest in the story, as it is told by F. Fleuret, that transcends its weirdness. The author is a master of that flexible French prose of the eighteenth century which he has already used to such a good purpose in his very spicy "Bienheureuse Raton, Fille de Joie."

I am tired of hearing of the differences between America and Europe. They have much more in common than the whole book-producing trade and corporation wants us to believe. Similarities do not pay. Contrasts do. Hence, the prevalence of exaggerated differentiations, all tending towards distortion. If you want to realize the essential sameness of American and European civilizations as compared with others, go to Morocco. If you cannot go to Morocco, read Jérôme and Jean Tharaud's "Marrakech ou les Seigneurs de l'Atlas" and "Fez ou les Bourgeois de l'Islam." Even if they had written nothing else, their great fame would be fully deserved.

"Une Epopée Canadienne," by M. Ch. de la Roncière, the learned Assistant Director of the Bibliothèque Nationale, is the story of those eleven brothers Le Moyne who, between 1650 and 1740, played such an enormous part in the history of North America, saved Montreal and Quebec, threatened New York, founded New Orleans. One of them, Le Moyne d'Iberville, is to French Canada what the Campeador was to early Spain. And do you know that there existed an Indian Society of Nations before Europe bethought herself of having one? The subject needed no romancing. It was a ready made epic. M. de la Roncière tells his story simply, honestly, as a true historian should, though not without warmth and enthusiasm.

"A new publishing firm has been established in London by Harold Shaylor in his own name to take over the business of Brentanos," says *John o'London's Weekly*, "and he announces for early publication a biography of Henley, the invalid poet, whose poem 'Invictus' is known to every anthology reader in England. Henley died in 1903 at the age of fifty-four. He was a cripple from boyhood, but made up for his physical weakness by an aggressive virility in his writings. He was portrayed under the name of 'Burly' in Stevenson's essay, 'Talk and Talkers.' His collected works were published in 1908. The new biography will be by Kennedy Williamson."

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Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

IN 1929 at the Fountain Press of New York was published an edition of six hundred and forty-two copies of "The Winding Stair," by William Butler Yeats. In 1928 his "The Tower" had been published by Macmillan. In both books notes at the end inform the reader that the Tower referred to is Thoor Ballylee or Ballylee Castle, where Yeats has written most of his more recent poems. In the first mentioned book the poet also says, "My poems attribute most of the meanings attributed in the past to the Tower—whether watch tower or pharos, and to its winding stair those attributed to gyre or whorl. What those meanings are let the poems say." Well, the pith of it is in this fine verse midway of the most slim volume:

I declare this tower is my symbol; I declare
This winding, gyring, spyring treadmill of
a stair is my ancestral stair;
That Goldsmith and the Dean, Berkeley and
Burke have travelled there:

Swift beating on his breast in sibylline
frenzy blind
Because the heart in his blood-sodden breast
had dragged him down into mankind
Goldsmith deliberately sipping at the honey-
pot of his mind;

And haughtier headed Burke that proved
the State a tree,
That this unconquerable labyrinth of the
birds, century after century
Cast but dead leaves to mathematical equal-
ity;

And God-appointed Berkeley that proved all
things a dream,
That this pragmatical preposterous pig of a
world, its farrow that so solid seem
Must vanish on the instant if the mind but
change its theme;

Saeva Indignatio *and the laborer's hire;*
The strength that gives our blood and state
magnanimity of its own desire;
Everything that is not God consumed with
intellectual fire.

And later on he remarks, "Is every modern nation like the tower half dead at the top?"

The sequence "A Woman Young and Old" has interested us most in "The Winding Stair," and of this sequence "Her Triumph" and "A Last Confession" strike us particularly. "The Tower" had, on the whole, better things to offer, for it opened with the remarkable "Sailing to Byzantium," it contained the perfect "Leda and the Swan," and in the title poem and the "Meditations in Time of Civil War" of 1926 and 1923 respectively gave a clear picture of the later Yeats, containing, if not his last will and testament, though he speaks of making it, his later declaration of faith:

I mock Plotinus' thought
And cry in Plato's teeth,
Death and life were not
Till man made up the whole,
Made lock, stock and barrel
Out of his bitter soul,
Aye, sun and moon and star, all,
And further add to that
That, being dead, we rise,
Dream and so create
Translunar Paradise.
I have prepared my peace
With learned Italian things
And the proud stones of Greece,
Poet's imaginings
And memories of love,
Memories of the words of women,
All those things whereof
Man makes a superhuman,
Mirror-resembling dream.

There is his poem on "Death" in "The Winding Stair" which should, indeed, be read in conjunction with the above. It declares

Nor dread nor hope attend
A dying animal;
A man awaits his end
Dreading and hoping all;
Many times he died,
Many times rose again.
A great man in his pride
Confronting murderous men
Casts derision upon
Supersession of breath;
He knows death to the bone—
Man has created death.

There is still astonishing vigor in these later books, small as they are. There is life in every fibre of them and that unusual speculation that is Yeats's oriflamme. His is a strange and a great genius.

"A Bravery of Earth" (Cape & Smith, 1930. $2) is the first long poem of a young American, Richard Eberhart. It was written at St. John's College, Cambridge, England. "It proposes," say the publishers, "to be a re-creation of states of being." Youth against age: "This fevers me," begins the young poet, "this sun on green, On grass glowing, this young spring."

The poem begins with a sinuous, graceful flow, the phrase fades into the pattern, the tranced weaving of a garment of praise for life that quickens in the young blood. Remarkable intuitions flash forth.

Why out of the still timeless,
The spaceless deep, moving I came,
I know not. Out of the turbulent chaos
Majestically still, I sprang, dreamless
Upon the hid wheel of time;
Through the measureless deeps my being
Spiraled and sparked in the first element,
Part of the æoned stillness,
The long enduring that is before
Awareness. The will like fire
Made me, I am the nebulous fire
In the loins of man burning, I am
Created out of the first creation.
Will wove me new on a loom
Used; I am a fresh pattern
Fashioned by will insatiate
To understand itself.

And the thought of death brings the young reply that

What man calls death is only
Change, the turn of life
Inherent in the lonely
Star and human strife.

The sense of "Time's dreaded weight" and of futility comes soon enough. The poet encounters actual death, "the mind, adrift on a floating world," turns for refuge to art, and then to travel and wonder of far lands. He ships from San Francisco and finds China and the Philippines. And

Still above him are the stars,
Vega, and Sirius, and Altair.
The Western ship must find ease
Through the Sulu Sea, by
Palawan and Borneo,
Then from the straits of Singapore
Seek haven in Sumatra's Isle.

The poetic summary of the poem on the last page runs:

Into the first awareness trembling,
Girded with mortality;
Into the second awareness plunging,
Impaled upon mentality;
Into the third awareness coming
To understand in men's action
Mankind's desire and destiny,
Youth lies buried and man stands up
In a bravery of earth.

The poem is long and not easy to read at a sitting, nor is the language very distinguished, but as a first flight it is promising.

As a number of books of lesser significance have accumulated in this department, we shall now list them with brief comments:

HEAVEN. By FRANK TOWNSHEND. Knopf. $2.

Another long poem, describing man's journey from earth into an ideal state, "from plane to plane of human experience" toward the Truth attained. Satirical descriptions. Intelligence and cleverness. An eccentric philosophical essay rather than poetry.

THE SONG OF TIADATHA. By OWEN RUTTER. Duffield. $1.

A Nut in St. James Street "jines the army" in the Great War and goes to France and Macedonia, and eventually back to England to his girl. In the metre, naturally, of "Hiawatha" this is an amusing trifle, and some of it was written at the Front.

RELEASED. A Book of Verse. By ANNE BLACKWELL PAYNE. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Not ungraceful magazine verse, but nothing outstanding. A poem like "Frost" has something of Emily Dickinson, and a child's poem like "The Party" has charm.

THE SKY THROUGH BRANCHES. By T. MORRIS LONGSTRETH. Century. $2.

Verses mostly brief, with several studies of homely characters. The technique fairly deft, the content appealing to human sympathies. Slight evidence of art.

PANORAMA. By ROWLAND THIRLMERE. Stratford-upon-Avon, England: Shakespeare Head Press. 6s.

Derivative, intentional poetry. The phrase of an elder day gone stale. Fustian mostly.

EARTH'S GENERATIONS PASS. By WILLIAM DUDLEY FOULKE. With Selections from his Earlier Lyrics, Sonnets, and Translations from Petrarch. Oxford University Press. $1.75.

A Hoosier minor poet who *would* translate Petrarch.

CITIES AND SOULS. By GILBERT CHASE. Chartres: Imprimerie Durand. 1929.

Subtitled "Poems of Spain."

Observations, admirations, translations, all in free verse. "In a manner neither new nor difficult," as done by so many.

SWALLOW FLIGHTS. By MARY MCKINLEY COBB. Oglethorpe University Press.

A posthumous volume by a religious woman.

FLAMES OF LIFE. By MINA ANGERMUELLER. The Four Seas Company. $2.

Hard to believe! Hard to believe!

THE HAND ORGAN MAN. By ELIAS LIEBERMAN. New York: Saga Press, 200 Varick Street. $2.

Magazine verse of the better order. Margaret Widdemer likes it.

ORPHEUS IN EXILE. By L. LOGAN KEAN. Atlanta: The Bozart Press.

Not all these verses are as inspired as:

I regret I did not know her when
A friend of mine.
She had peculiar ideas then,
Not nicely feminine.

THE SWORD. Poems written by G. O. WARREN. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell. New York: Longmans.

The author is a Boston woman. There is feeling here and metrical facility. We regret to say that there is little more.

VIRTUOSA. A Book of Verse. By LOUISE OWEN. Yale University Press. (The Yale Series of Younger Poets.)

Occasional slight originality. Some charm. Cultivated verse.

STRAINS FROM A DULCIMORE. By EMMA BELL MILES. Atlanta: The Bozart Press. $2.

A poet of the Cumberland, Tennessee. The indigenous creations aren't so bad. But the general run of the verse is mediocre.

THE NATURAL YEAR. April: June. By FREDERICK EDWARDS. New York: William Albert Broder.

Two slim books in a series of twelve by the former Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, Detroit. The verse is of the average run.

ANTHOLOGIES

PRIZE POEMS 1913-1929. Edited by CHARLES A. WAGNER, with an introduction by MARK VAN DOREN. Charles Boni: Paper Books.

Poems that have received prizes from *The Nation, The Dial, Poetry, Palms,* and *Contemporary Verse.* Most of them are above the average, some genuinely distinguished. The volume is most attractive in format with a cover design by Rockwell Kent. Some fine poets are included.

A LITTLE BOOK OF NECESSARY BALLADS. Compiled by WILHELMINA HARPER. Illustrated by HELEN B. EVERS. Harpers. $1.

A good selection of very well known classics for young people. A pocket-size book.

OLIVE, CYPRESS AND PALM. An anthology of Love and Death. Compiled by MINA CURTISS. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.

An excellent collection revealing remarkably good literary taste. The best consolation of its kind that we have ever seen. All distinguished poems, and the choices range throughout the whole corpus of English poetry.

TO THE GODS OF HELLAS. Lyrics of the Greek Games at Barnard College. Columbia University Press. $2.50.

Verse by recent graduates of Barnard, the most distinguished of whom is Babette Deutsch, for a yearly collegiate event. The book has been compiled and published for the Associate Alumnæ of Barnard by the Alumnæ Council and edited by Helen Erskine. Some of the verse is rather interesting.

THE GOLDEN STALLION. An anthology of Southwestern Verse. Edited by D. MAITLAND BUSHBY.

Here we have, among others, Mary Austin, Witter Bynner, Glenn Ward Dresbach, Sara Bard Field, Hildegarde Flanner, Robinson Jeffers, and Charles Erskine Scott Wood, so that there is some good work mixed in with the mediocre.

"Terrifying and magnificent . . . a fiercely honest account . . . extraordinarily compelling . . ." —*N. Y. Times*

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By PRIVATE 19022

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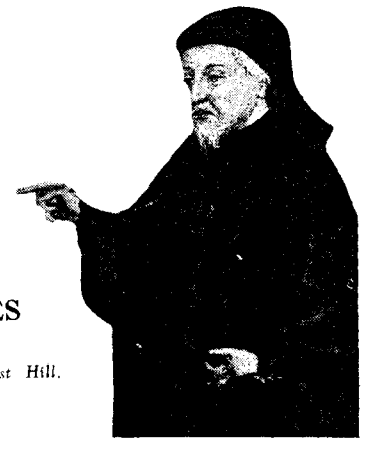

THE CANTERBURY TALES
by Geoffrey Chaucer
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LINCOLN MacVEAGH
THE DIAL PRESS-NEW YORK

Points of View

Publishing Figures

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

May we not express our gratification at the tone of your article on June 7th on book prices? It is refreshing to find your utterances temperate and considered.

Certainly, something more than price is to be thought of in connection with book publishing. And, even though the Book Publishers Research Institute, formed recently to propagate information about the book publishing industry, is in a position to show, on a price basis, that the publisher's business is based on a sound economic foundation, we are much more interested in the point of view that the really important thing is the quality of the literature that is provided for Americans to read. The author, the bookseller, and the publisher must have a living wage if the cultural development of America is not to be throttled and if the quality of its literature is not to be ruined.

Through our access to real book publishing figures, we quote the following to show that there is justification for the prices for books existent in the last few years:

On an average original edition of 3720 copies of a $2.50 novel, provided all copies printed are sold, the profit to the publisher is only 2.7% of the sales price to the consumer. Production costs, after deducting the customary discounts to jobbers and retailers, make up 35.4% of the amount the publisher receives for the books, as follows: 9.5% for paper and printing, 11.6% for binding and wrapper, and 14.3% for plates. Other items entering into the publisher's expense are 21.8% for author's royalties, 11.6% for advertising, and 26.6% for sales promotion, overhead, and other expenses. The 2.7% profit mentioned which goes to the publisher, assuming that all 3,720 copies are sold, would only be $251.10. The above percentages are all based on the price that the publisher gets from the retailer or jobber, except the 2.7% figure of net profit which is based on the sales price to the consumer.

It should be borne in mind that this analysis is based on the assumption, by no means warranted by the facts, that (1) every copy of this average original edition is sold, and (2) every copy is sold through the usual wholesale and retail channels of the United States, excluding from consideration sales to foreign countries or otherwise at less than the usual wholesale price. The study shows that approximately 45% of the new books printed each year never go past the original edition. The second and subsequent editions often amount to as few as 500 copies. No allowance is made in the above figures for copies which must be given away for review and as samples which also necessarily reduces the publisher's profit.

The figures, according to the Institute, should form a basis on which the public can judge the industry. The figures also should be an authoritative starting point for future discussions of the economic aspects of book publishing. According to the Institute, the figures prove the economic fallacy of changing present price standards unless book standards are to suffer and culture, education, and knowledge in America are to decline.

EDWIN BAILEY, Secretary.
Book Publisher's Research Institute.

From Across the Seas

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

The *Review* is a welcome weekly visitor, here on our hilltop overlooking the blue Mediterranean, and I follow with interest all of the various features contained therein. Yours is the only American Review that can be put side-by-side with its worthy contemporary, The *London Times Literary Supplement.*

I am very deeply interested in the problem of war literature. Under the title "Reading and Fighting" in the issue of April 12th you have said: "the appeal to the emotions is dangerous, as a preventative of war. . . . Not the emotions must be appealed to by those who hope by books to discourage war."

It would be of very great interest to me to know actually what the verdict of American thought is on this problem. It is open to debate. Personally it is my deep conviction that reasoned calculation has already outrun conception; that our great need in American literature is for that generous emotional impulse, which may enable us to act that which we imagine, for the day when "Love, from its awful throne of patient power, springs and folds over the world its healing wings."

Instead of your words "It is the reason, not the emotions, that must be appealed to" would you reconsider, and substitute "it is the right emotions, not the wrong emotions, that must be appealed to"? Do not misunderstand me: I am most heartily in accord with your theme that "a really good war book is just a really good war book." But instead of encouraging the substitution of books "that tell why wars come and what they leave behind them" I would so much prefer the advocacy of books which lead the reader to turn his mind away from war altogether, away from "Thou shalt nots" toward the rich harvest of intellectual beauty:

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,
These are the seals of that most firm assurance
Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength.

It has long been my conviction that the surest way to make a child want to play with matches is to tell him: "No! No!" And there's not much difference on this score between matches and cannon!

It would be of very deep interest to me to know what reaction your readers would manifest with regard to this fundamental and most important problem.

T. W. HUNTINGTON.
Anacapri, Italy.

Tower of Ivory

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

The origin of the famous phrase, "the poets' tower of ivory," seems to be derived from the litany of the Virgin, in which the lines, "Turris davidica, turris eburnea," are incorporated. Here a tower of ivory is taken in the sense of a city of refuge. These appellations of the Virgin may be again derived from verses in the "Song of Solomon," Chapter IV, 4, "Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury"; and Chapter VII, 4, "Thy neck is as a tower of ivory." In Psalm CXLIV, verses 1 and 2, the Lord is called "my strength . . . my goodness, and my fortress, my high tower, and my deliverer," where the tower is again thought of as a place of refuge.

Sainte-Beuve seems to be the first to associate any poet with a tower of ivory. He does this in a romantic epistle addressed to A M. Villemain, published in the "Pensées d'Août," October 1837. At this time Sainte-Beuve had passed through a period of religious interest which soon found fruition in the lectures delivered at Lausanne called "Histoire de Port Royal." In this epistle to Villemain, Sainte-Beuve characterizes his contemporaries, and in the fragment which follows (third stanza) makes his famous reference to Alfred de Vigny and his tower of ivory:

La poésie en France allait dans la fadeur,
Dans la description sans vie et sans grandeur,
Comme un ruisseau chargé dont les ondes avares
Expirent en cristaux sous des grottes bizarres,
Quand soudain se rouvrit avec limpidité
Le rocher dans sa veine. André ressuscité
Parut: Hybla rendait à ce fils des abeilles
Le miel frais, dont la cire éclaira tant de veilles.
Aux pieds du vieil Homère il chantait à plaisir,
Montrant l'autre horizon, l'Atlantide à saisir.
Des rivaux, sans l'entendre, y couraient pleins de flamme.
Lamartine ignorant, qui ne sait que son âme,
Hugo puissant et fort, Vigny soigneux et fin,
D'un destin inégal, mais aucun d'eux en vain,
Tentaient le grand succès et disputaient l'empire.
Lamartine régna; chantre ailé qui soupire,
Il planait sans effort. Hugo, dur partisan,
(Comme chez Dante on voit, Florentin ou Pisan,
Un baron féodal), combattit sous l'armure,
Et tint haut sa bannière au milieu du murmure:
Il la maintient encore; et Vigny, plus secret,
Comme en sa tour d'ivoire, avant midi, rentrait.

WILLIAM LEONARD SCHWARTZ.
Stanford University.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Mr. H. B. Learned may be interested in the following items which were clipped from the Boston *Transcript* two or three years ago.

"Allusions to the 'Ivory Tower' usually refer to Saint-Beuve's famous phrase, which is found in his book, 'Les Consolations,' published in 1831. In reviewing the great romanticists he compares Victor Hugo to a feudal baron ready to fight with all his armor on, and says of Alfred de Vigny

. . . et Vigny, plus secret,
Comme en sa tour d'ivoire midi rentrait.

"In Warner's 'Library of the World's Best Literature,' volume 26, under Alfred de Vigny will be found an explanation of the 'Ivory Tower.' Saint-Beuve's famous phrase is mentioned by Larousse under 'tour' and 'Vigny' in some editions.

"'Tower of Ivory' (Turris eburnea) is mentioned in Canticles vii, 4. Tower of Ivory is one of the invocations of the Litany of Loretto applied allegorically to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Commentaries on the Old Testament or Bible dictionaries will explain the term."

For several months I have been looking for a more satisfactory explanation of the origin of the phrase, and I shall be interested in any information which others may have to offer.

L. C. VASBINDER,
Reference Librarian.
Colgate University Library.

The Deed Confounds Us

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

The verses by me, printed in your number of July 12, and therein called "An Epistle," have already been published in my book "The Great Enlightenment" (where they are called "To An Old Friend") in a revised and, as I believe, considerably bettered form. It was a minor shock to happen upon the original version at this late date. How came it, and from what—as Max Beerbohm once called them—inilluminable catacombs, to be disintered? But no matter. I merely wish to express a preference for the later version—which I hope you may share with me, since both (the first openly, the second more discreetly) were addressed to you.

LEE WILSON DODD.
West Cornwall, Conn.

D. H. Lawrence Letters

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

I shall be most grateful if you will give publicity to the following communication, addressed to all those who may have any letters from the late D. H. Lawrence in their possession. The Administrators of Mr. Lawrence's Estate have asked me to collect his letters, and arrangements have been made for having them copied and filed. May I therefore ask all those of Lawrence's correspondents to whom I have not already written personally, to send their letters to Mrs. Hilton, 44 Mecklenburg Square, London, W.C.1? The originals will be copied and returned as soon as possible. If it should be decided to publish any of the letters (the copyright in which vests exclusively in the estate), correspondents will be informed which of their letters or parts of letters have been selected.

ALDOUS HUXLEY.
La Gorguette, France.

A Romer Wilson Memoir

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

It is proposed to publish a Memoir of the late Romer Wilson and to issue a selection of her letters. I shall be grateful if her correspondents will send me any letters which they may possess. They will be faithfully copied and returned promptly.

EDWARD J. O'BRIEN.
Villa Pauliska,
Muralto-Locarno, Switzerland.

Gangland of Yesteryear

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

Gangland and the necessity of negotiating with it have a hoary history. M. Gustave Reynier, in his recent book, "La Femme au XVIIe Siècle," relates the organization of a fashionable series of entertainments, usually given in the afternoon as the streets were not safe after dark. But on Saturdays there was a ball and a theatrical offering in the evening. And, lest any timid ladies might dread a late return home, the announcement included the following:

"A good escort will be provided for persons who have need of it for the safety of their money, their jewels, and their lace. Perhaps we shall have no need of guards as we are negotiating with the pick-pockets of Paris, who promise us good passports, by means of which the bearers may go and come in perfect safety. The light fingered gentry have proven for some time that they are most scrupulous in keeping their word when once they have given it."

BENJAMIN M. WOODBRIDGE.
Reed College.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Biography

A QUAKER FORTY-NINER. By CHARLES EDWARD PANCOAST. University of Pennsylvania Press. 1930. $3.50.

A new story about Lincoln is sufficient of itself to give a book distinction. Such a story is told in this posthumous volume of Mr. Pancoast. Riding on the Illinois prairie in an open farm wagon without springs in the winter of 1841-2, with the thermometer at zero, Mr. Pancoast and his fellow passengers became so cold in this poor substitute for a stage coach that with one exception they got out and ran in order to keep warm. When they arrived at Jacksonville, which was not far from Springfield, the passenger who had insisted upon sticking to the wagon found that his ears and feet were frozen. "When he came to the fire," records Pancoast, "his suffering was intense, and he did not bear it with Christian humility and submission." The landlord introduced Pancoast to Lincoln, "then of little note except in that locality." After some remarks about the freezing journey across the prairie, Lincoln said that he thought the suffering passenger—evidently a salesman—was fortunate, after all, for although his feet and ears were badly damaged he had saved his stock in trade. When Pancoast asked how that was, Lincoln replied that his tongue was left intact.

This experience is one of a multitude of unusual incidents, ranging all the way from the humorous to the tragic, with which Mr. Pancoast's pages are filled. His book is much more than its title indicates, for his trip to California in the exciting days of '49 was only a part of his adventures on the "American frontier." He was born a Quaker in New Jersey and remained a Quaker, but he had a restless disposition which set him apart from most of his fellow religionists and which took him to St. Louis and other points in the sparsely settled West. In the course of his adventures, business and social, he met a series of odd characters which give a Dickensian touch to his narrative. More than once he was in danger of serious injury or even death from ruffians, but he survived every peril and after fourteen years of wandering returned to Philadelphia, whence he had started, to live a comparatively peaceful life for more than half a century, dying in 1906 at the age of eighty-seven. His book has the double interest and value of an original document and a vivid tale.

Education

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN. By ALFRED ADLER. Greenberg. 1930. $3.50.

One finds much good common sense in this book, much that is suggestive and borne out by individual experience, but its form detracts from its value. The style is rambling, and the subject matter esentially unorganized. Juggling the titles of the chapters would not matter much. The book is descriptive and interpretive rather than explanatory in the scientific sense or practical in its effort to teach those responsible for children.

The central theme of the book may be stated as follows: When a child's struggle towards his vision of "greatness, perfection, and superiority" meets with failure his feelings of inferiority result in compensating behavior which is inexplicable *per se*, and often asocial. Such behavior must be regarded as symptomatic and its source studied. By education the author means an effort to help an individual to increase in self-knowledge and so enable him to live on better terms with his fellows.

ADOLESCENCE: Studies in Mental Hygiene. By FRANKWOOD E. WILLIAMS. Farrar & Rinehart. 1930.

In this book Dr. Williams has published a number of lectures, the greater number of which discuss the problems of adolescence. There is much wisdom in the book, presented in a conversational, somewhat journalistic, way which is altogether attention-compelling. If taken personally, the lectures should be suggestive to many. One is left puzzling over the question: "Adult though one may be chronologically and intellectually, how far has one actually progressed toward adulthood emotionally?"

Probable sources of adolescent types of behavior are ably discussed. It is to be hoped that the author's attitude of tolerance towards such behavior will be contagious. It is pointed out repeatedly that there are no simple rules or formulæ which can be applied to solve the problems of the individual adolescent. A few general principles are useful, but individual study by a specialist is most productive of good results where serious difficulties are incipient.

Fiction

THE DATCHLEY INHERITANCE. By STEPHEN MCKENNA. Dodd, Mead. 1930. $2.50.

Whoever bases a novel, in these well read days, on the old major premise of the crank will, must give us something quite remarkable to justify himself. Mr. McKenna assumes an aged miser who leaves a huge fortune to the first of his nine grandsons who marries, provided he will take grandfather's name and live in grandfather's gloomy Scotch castle. It is hard to see what could be done with this except in reckless extravaganza; Mr. McKenna elects to play it straight, and it must be observed that the reasons which led several of his young men, or the young women on whom they bestowed their attentions, to refuse four million pounds, are very far from convincing. Also they are almost all a disagreeable lot; eventually a hero emerges, resourceful and bold, but too late to rescue the reader's interest. It is not Mr. McKenna's fault that a reviewer with a long memory recalls how much better Gouverneur Morris handled a very similar theme some twenty years ago; but surely a veteran and prolific novelist might be expected to give us something more plausible than this.

THE PRINCE'S DARLING. By GEORGE PREEDY. Dodd, Mead. 1930. $2.50.

With the skill and verve which delighted the readers of "General Crack," George Preedy recounts the minor tragedy of a mistress of an Elector of Saxony at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Madelon de Neitschutz, like other light ladies before and since, attempted to find room in her life both for the man who gave her luxury and power, and for the man she loved, an attempt, given the characters involved and the circumstances of the time and place, fraught with disaster from the first. The theme of the "Prince's Darling" is somewhat more hackneyed than that of "General Crack" and though the invention of incident and detail is unflagging, and the historical background is handled with freshness and precision, the readers' interest is not caught quite so closely as it was by the romantic adventurousness of Mr. Preedy's earlier novel.

This is not a tale of high and heroic deeds, and all the apparatus of the cloak and sword romance, the flash of steel, the clatter of hoofs, the easy acquaintance with the minutiæ of deportment in the age of the *Roi Soleil*, and with the complicated intrigues of the German princes, cannot quite remove a suggestion of the sordid and the commonplace. But Mr. Preedy's novel is lifted considerably above the average run by the dexterity of its execution. It is a sound, even a distinguished book, and deserves the welcome which addicts of historical romance will surely accord it.

THE FOOL'S PARADE. By JOHN W. VANDERCOOK. Harpers. 1930. $2.50.

The author of "Black Majesty" and "Tom Tom" has given us in "The Fool's Parade," the title story of a collection of his tales ranging from ten to thirty thousand words, an admirable and critical fable laid in a setting and dealing with a subject that seems to fascinate the new order of romantics.

It is the narrative of the escape of five prisoners from the French penal settlements, commonly known as "the dry guillotine." Under the leadership of Acquarone, an ex-lawyer, four men, Gallay, a poet, Abbemon, an unfrocked priest, Brierre, a peasant of enormous strength, and Le Brun a thief, bribe a hailer and are set free to wander unarmed and nearly naked for months in the almost impenetrable, silent, deadly jungles of the Guianas. The primitive conditions of their new life cause them to assume new relationships to one another, and Acquarone, whose shrewdness and cunning had made him leader, is quickly relegated to a subordinate position which eventually so humiliates him that he leaves the safety of the crowd and goes off alone to die in the jungle. The other four struggle on, their lives now dependent on the patience of Abbemon, and the strength of Brierre.

Ambition, vanity, pity, and love successively kill off four members of the struggling band, and it is left for Le Brun, the little thief, who has no illusions, no ideals, no vanity, no expectations, no desires except to get enough to eat, a place to sleep, the barest necessities of existence, and who was a thief merely because that happened to be the nearest thing to do, to win alone to safety and to recount the story of this perilous unhappy odyssey.

"Djombe River" laid in the African bush is the story of a woman's sacrifice of herself to a man's dream, the man's acceptance and subsequent realization that the dream was not worth the price. This, the longest story in the book, is powerful and moving, told with simple and almost cold dignity. The remaining pieces also deal with Africa, and none is without interest and its bearing on the spiritual problem which preoccupies Mr. Vandercook.

The prose is rich without being gaudy. There is throughout an impersonality both in technique and style which indicates that the author dreads being identified with his material. He frequently introduces himself as the narrator at secondhand, sometimes at thirdhand, a literary device which holds the reader at a distance.

The book is beautifully bound and printed and well illustrated.

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS. By DON HEROLD. Farrar and Rinehart. 1930. $2.50.

"All the world's a bed, and all the people and all the things in it are strange bedfellows." With this well known quotation from the Bard of Avon, as one might say, Mr. Herold is off on his ticking-covered "crazy-quilt memoirs, life-maxims, and what-not."

"After supper, on July 9, 1889, a little boy baby was born to Mr. and Mrs. Ot Herold, in a big bed in Bloomfield, Indiana." That is the opening sentence, of "Strange Bedfellows" and perhaps its authentic ring excuses the saleswoman who was overheard quite seriously recommending the book as "a life of Mr. Herold written by himself." There is no use trying to record the humor of Mr. Herold in any words but his own, the flavor is lost with the quotation marks. Here are some of the significant milestones in his child-life from his own pen. "My father was an Elk, so I came naturally by my love for the great outdoors. Though I was born in 1889, it was not until 1905 that my parents first took me out of the house." That was, as you will recall "the spring that Jenny Lind sang at the Haymarket riots in Chicago."..

And so it goes. Whether Don Herold is telling about his dogs ("Chowser lived with us for several years and was all right. He bit a child now and then, but it happened that he usually chose Christian Science children, so no harm done"), or about his temperature ("I once had a fever of 200° for two consecutive years and it left me baldheaded. . . . At that time I had great faith in the power of mind over matter, and my faith was vindicated for I finally dropped down to a normal temperature of 109°"), or about creative ecstasy, or Tia Juana, or impacted molars, or the whatnots referred to in the title, his ideas are always worth listening to and his non-ideas are always worth laughing at. And even if there were not a word in the book it would, of course, be worth while on account of the Don Herold, nut-headed, bird-nosed people in the drawings,—look on page twenty-seven for the very quintessence of elegance and arrogance.

THE ANT HEAP. By EDWARD KNOBLOCK. Minton, Balch. 1930. $2.50.

Perhaps it is well that a cobbler should stick to his last. Sometimes, of course, he cleans hats as well and occasionally makes a pretty good job of it; but more often the individual had better make his choice of either shoes or hats.

One remembers Henry James's adventure in play-writing, how he boasted of his mastery of the technique of the thing: "I have made it absolutely my own, put it in my pocket," he exclaims jubilantly in one of his letters; but when "Guy Domville" was produced a few weeks later the audience, not caring a bit about the technique, hissed it vigorously, and thereafter James returned sorrowfully to his last.

Probably it is easier for a novelist to acquire the technique of play-writing than for a playwright to acquire the technique of the novel—the very discursiveness of the latter, after the necessary compression of the acts of a play, must be bewildering to the

(*Continued on next page*)

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—The Times (London).

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

author. Mr. Knoblock, who gave mighty aid to Arnold Bennett in producing "Milestones," now essays the novel form himself without the help of expert collaboration. Let it be said that many professional novelists have written far worse novels than this; but on the other hand, Mr. Knoblock has written far better plays than this is a novel. Escaping from the trammels of the stage, he fairly riots in the diffusion that the fiction form makes possible but not always desirable. Ranging over a whole decade of pre-war, war, and post-war London, there is hardly anything that he does not touch, from cheap melodrama to more or less serious sociology; but to touch is not always to adorn. Only in the short vignettes in which some of the long list of *dramatis personæ* are sketched is revealed the practiced hand of the skilled dramatist we know. It was good that Henry James went back to novel writing; it is good that most cobblers should stick to their lasts. Raphael may have written a century of sonnets, but nobody ever reads them.

A FAMILY THAT WAS. By ERNEST RAYMOND. Appleton. 1930. $2.50.

When Dr. O'Grogan, vicar of St. Austin's, a very proper Anglican church in London, somewhere off the Kensington Road, cleared out one day, leaving word that he had gone to Belgium with the wife of the local veterinary, his friends, parish, and family were taken completely aback. This escapade of the vicar's was the beginning of the disruption of the O'Grogan family: hence, the title of the novel. Mr. Raymond tackles sturdily the job of telling about the O'Grogans; but for all his good will, he cannot quite get the air of solidity and tangibleness that Bennett, say, would have evoked. The emphasis at the beginning is on the accumulation of everyday detail, but later it changes to a close interpretation of the youngest of the children, the idealistic but not very bright Tony. In the second half of the book, the other children and the idea of the family get pretty well lost in the background, and the novel loses its early vigor.

This Tony, about whom the novel centers, is not a particularly successful character. He is unconvincing, for we do not know enough about him. His tendency to make over-good friends with his schoolmates and later with the boys at the school where he is a master, is dealt with by Mr. Raymond vaguely though at considerable length. This latent homosexuality fails to seem important in the narrative, for when Tony, a mature person at the end of the book, finally marries, he carries no scars and has apparently forgotten his early difficulties. As a whole, Tony's character lacks sharp definition and does not enlist our sympathy.

Yet "A Family That Was" is a better novel than the average. It is honest and often interesting, for all its lack of direction and discipline.

THE WAY HOME. By HENRY HANDEL RICHARDSON. Norton. 1930. $2.50.

Now we have all of Richard Mahony's story. "Ultima Thule" harrowed us with his decline and death; "Australia Felix" gave us his early store-keeping and doctoring days in Ballarat; and now in "The Way Home" we see him during his middle years, in England and Australia. Over the past eight months, while these volumes have been appearing, we have come to realize the power and the high distinction of Henry Handel Richardson's writing.

"The Way Home" picks up Richard Mahony as he gets to England after having, through restlessness and morbidity, given up a good medical practice in the frontier town of Ballarat. He suffers vicissitudes and torments in different parts of England until a lucky investment gives him an opportunity to go back to his home—Australia. There, for a time, he and his wife share an uneasy prosperity; their children are born, and the days seem much brighter than any Mahony has known before. But they are, so to speak, merely weather-breeders. Trouble comes, and Mahony is again convinced that his only happiness lies in running away to England. At the end of the book a financial disaster leaves the situation as we find it at the opening of "Ultima Thule." "The Way Home" is, perhaps, less sustained and less self-sufficient than the other two volumes, for it has neither beginning nor ending. But if read with the others, in proper sequence, it sustains its part perfectly.

There is no need to restate in detail the excellence of the characterizations in the Mahony novels, the strength of the style, the vividness of the Australian background. In this book, as in the other two, Mahony is a profoundly moving figure, tragic and universal. He evokes the Aristotelian pity and terror; he is in many ways Everyman, and hence he strikes close home to each one of us. To read the trilogy from first page to last is a vastly satisfying emotional experience. Henry Handel Richardson writes without sentimentality but with infinite compassion.

STRANGE PURSUIT. By PATRICK WYNNTON. Lippincott's. 1930. $2.

This is a collection of worn-out melodramatic devices which gain a certain novelty from the fact that few authors are rash enough to spread them so thick as Mr. Wynnton does. The hero is an impecunious English baronet turned smuggler, a very noble fellow at heart, worshipped by his men, and all that sort of thing. Almost at the outset of the book, he is married, without knowing it, in the course of a French fête, to a total stranger who, by a piece of great good luck for Sir Hugo, is extremely beautiful. If the reader's patience survives this multiplication of improbabilities, he will be ill rewarded for his forbearance by finding the smuggling gang shipwrecked and so put in the power of an insane hermit who demands that they shall draw lots to see whom he shall sacrifice—and if the reader likes that kind of thing, there is more to come.

The sentiment is plentiful and conventional. The style is cheap and strained. The jacket declares that the author knows Marseilles and the southern French coast intimately; readers may weigh the jacket's testimony against the facts that he gives "*Va-t'on*" for "Go away" and "Denise" as the name of a Frenchman, and form their own judgments.

THE BREAK OF DAY. By BASIL KING. Harpers. 1930. $2.

This book has the uniquely annoying fault of not playing fair with the reader. It promises to be the story of the theft of a small fortune by a middle-aged woman of previously blameless life. In the opening chapter a woman, living precariously on a small and dwindling capital, finds in a booth in the safe-deposit vault of her bank a package of bonds worth sixty thousand dollars; overcome by the unexpected temptation, she places it in her own strong-box. In the next chapter we are introduced to Mrs. Penhallow's home, and to her two grown children; she tells them that the family fortune has been considerably increased, but refuses entirely to tell them how. So far, the story has possibilities; one may disregard the inquiry of the jacket, "Would your mother steal $60,000?" as impertinent in every sense, but the effect of such a crime upon a genteel, straitened household like the Penhallows' should be interesting to watch. Very little, however, is made of this opportunity; the son goes through some rather conventional agonies of suspicion, but we are never let into the mind of Mrs. Penhallow, who should, one feels, be the central figure. This remains surprising until the end of the book, when it appears that Mrs. Penhallow's increased income came from a black-sheep brother of whom nobody had ever heard, and the bonds were stolen by somebody entirely different; the trusting reader was deceived by the shallow device of calling the woman in the opening scene nothing but "She." A new day breaks for Roger Penhallow, but the book has lost the virtues of the realistic novel without gaining those of the mystery story.

The author does not trust entirely for the interest of the book to the plot he has let fall between two stools. There are several sub-plots, but each is treated with the same timid indecision. Thus the hero, a young man in a small, old New England town, marries a cosmopolitan girl whose mother has a past of the old-fashioned kind. The girl's own character is impossible to judge, but at least such a marriage should have some kind of important effect, which the author avoids by making her die in childbirth.

The style, in strong contrast to the matter, is self-consciously strong, full of emotional passages and violent figures. For a fair example:

> They were the conditions in which Rogers' longing for love was as maddening as the thirst of a lion in a country without water-holes.

But all that is powerless to lend conclusiveness to the plots, which are handled with a niggling hesitancy that ultimately frets the reader like a fidgety companion in a small room.

RED WAGON. By LADY ELEANOR SMITH. Bobbs-Merrill. 1930. $2.50.

A Lord's daughter writes a tale of circus life. And if one asks, What can such a person know of such a life? the answer will take up considerable space. Lady Eleanor Smith has been interested in the ways of the nomadic entertainers of her own countryside ever since she was a child. She has really liked them while studying them, and this appears pleasantly enough in her story of their jumbled days and nights. The author also speaks the Romany tongue and is reported to have acted as intermediary in the minor troubles occurring between the authorities and their gypsy guests on Epsom Downs. For the most part this knowledge of the gypsy people and the travelling shows forms a pervasive and enriching background, but occasionally it comes disproportionately to the fore. One feels a touch of the conscious, the instructive, in the careful introduction of the Romany phrase or the showman's foible. But, alas, for the infallibility of the expert, some one has already pointed out that Wild West shows originated in America with Buffalo Bill sometime in the early 'eighties, while Lady Eleanor has her first such group touring our continent as early as 1860.

"Red Wagon" tells the story of Joe Prince from his circus birth till his circus death. He endures the conventional hardships of an orphan without relatives, and he achieves the conventional successes of one. The actual happenings in Joe's life fit a little too well into the pattern for "poor but honest boy" tales. It is in the telling that Joe's story takes on color and a certain pathetic reality. The book, taken as a whole, is disappointing after the flattering press it has had in England, but taken page by page for its atmosphere of that strange life which rolls along on colored wheels, it does have something of the charm of far off days when the circus used to come to town.

SPRING DUST. By OLIVE WADSLEY. Dodd, Mead. 1930. $2.

This novel of modern marriage might better have been named "Spring Lust." The story related is of one Charles Reval, child of a fly-by-night marriage between Chloe Carew and a French actor, a marriage that Lady Carew succeeded in wrecking, with the result that the distracted actor commits suicide. Beautiful Chloe marries Hugh Waring, of the "polo face," with money, influence, family, tradition, and all the rest of the padding vital to this breed of romance. Charles Reval is discreetly forgotten, turned over to a German hairdresser and his wife, who care for him tenderly until he is fourteen. Then through the war he loses (temporarily) his foster-father and through a fever his foster-mother. "On his own," Charles is left high and dry with a baby boy, gift of one Lili of questionable repute. With this foundling, he works his way through a hostile England, as waiter, tinker, barge-boy, net-mender, fisherman. When he is twenty-one, Clive Simington, lawyer, discovers in him the heir to a large fortune left by his paternal grandfather in America. He is tossed into London society, the mud of his humble past is scraped from his shoes, and kind friends turn him into a gentleman. The meeting with his fashionable and indifferent mother produces in her no disturbance other than mild distress at his dirty fingernails. He is caught in the golden web of Marigold Dacres's "daffodil hair" and "lapis lazuli eyes," and blind to the sterling qualities of Simington's sister Carol, marries the gold-digging Marigold, who has been conducting and continues to conduct a love affair with one Bill Huston. This, Charles of course discovers in time, and the machinery of divorce is set in motion. Love's young dream is shattered, and Charles reverts to a childhood passion: to be a builder of houses. His domestic future is not difficult to guess—with Carol (the reader's choice from the first)—patiently waiting.

This English novel is a perfect example of the literature Mr. Nock recently denounced as being so typical of contemporary America, a book to be read for its contents alone, a book pandering to our lower appetites. It is a strange mixture of realism and cheap romanticism. One feels that the author had but one purpose in mind and that was to create an effect. When Marigold Dacres is approached for the first time by the now wealthy Charles Reval, who attempts in his crude way to express his adolescent passion, she says to herself, "Of course this is like a scene from Tess, or something classic and mouldy like that! Stonehenge in Bond Street on a June night. Heavens above, this rustic lad will need a lot of teaching! Is it worth it? Even a huge income? Can I stick it?"

No less commonplace and sensational than the style is the theme of this book. Incredibly glib and affected, the author seems to have become infected with her character's superficialties, or they with hers. The hero, despite his immaculate soul and flawless appearance, strikes us somehow as fighting his literary creator's shallow ambitions. We feel that had Olive Wadsley given Charles Reval a chance to strike out for himself, he might have made of this flashy and trivial novel something sounder. Like the cover and jacket, "Spring Dust" has the color and depth of a raspberry sherbet.

COPS 'N ROBBERS. By JOHN RUSSELL. Norton. 1930. $2.

In these thirteen short stories Mr. Russell has packed a vast amount of melodrama, for the most part incredible but nevertheless somehow pleasant and readable. The collection has a faintly old-fashioned air about it, an unexpected whiff of O. Henry and of the days when gangsters and rackets were unheard of. Perhaps this non-modern quality is due to Mr. Russell's attitude toward policemen: he sees his cops as benevolent guardians of the peace, as quaint characters. That is news for us these days. Furthermore, the tone is occasionally a little preachy, thus enervating the force of the melodrama.

Three of the crime stories are good, "The Burglar," "The Civilian," and "Brandy 1812." These combine ingenuity of construction with direct, effective telling. "The Wise Men" is good reading, but after we have finished, all we remember is the labored moral. In the last story, "The Man Who Was Dead," Mr. Russell goes delightfully gruesome; it is the best of the lot, though dealing with neither cops nor robbers. We wish that he had done more in the same vein. Some of the rest are passable; only three, "Boston Limited," "Plivit's Inspiration," and "Violets," are definitely bad.

History

MRS. GRUNDY. By *Leo Markun*. Appleton. 1930. $5.

IN THE PICTURESQUE SHENANDOAH VALLEY. By *Armistead C. Gordon*. Richmond: Garrett & Massie, Inc. 1930. $2.50.

THE INFIDEL EMPEROR. By *Paul Wiegler*. Dutton. 1930. $5.

A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CORN LAWS, 1660-1864. By *Donald Grove*. Barnes. Crofts.

WOMEN WORKERS AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, 1750-1850. By *Ivy Pinchbeck*. Crofts.

THE DISCOVERY OF CANADA. By *Lawrence J. Burpee*. Graphic Publisher.

THE PHILIPPINES PAST AND PRESENT. By *Dean. C. Worcester*. New and revised edition. Macmillan. $6.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1865. By *Nelson P. Mead*. Harcourt, Brace.

CIVIL WAR PRISONS. By *William Best Hesseltine*. Ohio State University Press. $3.

THE MASSACHUSETTS BAY COMPANY AND ITS PREDECESSORS. By *Frances Rose-Troup*. Grafton Press.

Juvenile

OUR AMERICA. By RAMON COFFMAN. New York: Dodd, Mead. 1930. $3.50.

This volume, designed for very young readers of from seven to twelve, is better written than planned. Its most striking feature is that it deals very much more fully with the early part of American history than with the later part. In less than three hundred pages, 218 are required to bring us

(*Continued on page 14*)

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquires in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, 2 Bramerton St., Chelsea S.W.3, London.

S. C. writes from Chicago: "I suppose the phrase that leaps to the mind of millions of people when they hear the name Sherlock Holmes is, 'Quick, Watson, the needle!' It is curious, and true, that this line does not occur in any of the Doyle stories about Holmes, neither does it occur in the Gillette play—unless my researches have been uncommonly faulty. Where in the world did it start?"

THERE was at least one among the millions to whose mind it does not leap. This was the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whom I immediately consulted. He said he never heard the phrase, and that it "sounds amusing." Mr. Stanley Morison, author of "John Bell" (Cambridge University Press), who can give you chapter and verse on anything about Sherlock Holmes, says it comes from a burlesque of the Gillette play, popular in England at the height of the Holmes furore; the needle introduced was built on the lines of a bicycle pump, only considerable larger. It is sweet to start a Holmes fan upon his dear topic; Christopher Morley should know something of this, being of this company. S. C. is clearly one; notice that he has been conducting "researches." The most enlivening of these in recent years—indeed the most enlivening that have been conducted—may be found together with a number of other excellent amusements in Ronald Knox's "Essays in Satire" (Dutton). Here the problem of whether Holmes ever did come back from that bout with Moriarity over the cliff and write the later stories, is resolved with the utmost sobriety and after the methods of higher criticism. This, by the way, is the book with the high-hearted satire, "Jael's Hammer," which was passed about from hand to hand in the little review in which it first appeared till copies all came to bear the inscription "Return without fail to So-and-so."

Speaking of Sherlock, *R. T. B., New York*, has sent me a copy of the publication of the Detective Story Club, "Secret Orders," for January of this year, with a list of twenty-two lost tales of Sherlock Holmes, not counting ten mentioned in the "Case Book." These are, of course, cases to which he refers by name in talk with Watson; one of these, "The Adventure of the Second Stain," was afterwards written, but teasers like "The Affair of the Amateur Mendicant Society," "Ricoletti of the Club Foot and His Abominable Wife," and "The Adventure of the Tired Captain," remain in the inkpot.

Holmes and Watson are safe to stay with us for at least another American generation; so I learned at the Lincoln School of Teachers College not long ago. The children were presenting famous charatcers in hastily improvised costumes; each was allowed to speak one short sentence, cross the stage, and leave the company to guess who he was. Two ten-year-old boys in dressing-gowns took their seats across from each other at a table, each with a pipe in his mouth. The audience looked a bit puzzled till one spoke. *"Elementary, Watson!"* said he, and the school cried out the dear detective's name as one child.

G. S., Los Angeles, Cal., writes: "While studying German, I have suddenly discovered that grammar is interesting. At the end of two weeks study I now know more theoretical German grammar than English, and I should like to balance my knowledge better. Tell me the name of a thorough English grammar—not merely correct usage—one that would give the same basic knowledge of its subject that a German grammar would of German. Tell me a comparative grammar, if such a work exists, comparing English with other members of the family of languages. Tell me a good Latin grammar. And tell me if there are other good works on its subject besides Jesperson's "Growth and Structure of the English Language."

I WONDER where the notion started that grammar was dull or dispensable? I wonder when it was that our schools came to the conclusion that our old and rich language could be learned by the method of trial and error, and apparently altogether by ear? I wonder how many of us, well past the school age, "suddenly discovered" that grammar has even possibilities of excitement? One's language need not thereby become too precise and pedantic; even in my school days this was less a study than a sort of indoor sport, and as frequenters of this part of the paper have found out, I still use my own sweet will in the use of shall.

As for English grammar, there is the "New English Grammar" of E. A. Sonnenschein (Oxford University Press), based on the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology, a book for class-room use, or for the scholar the famous "New English Grammar, Logical and Historical," of Henry Sweet (Oxford University Press). Between these is the "Advanced English Grammar" of Kittredge and Farley (Ginn), a standard work used at Harvard in the course in English composition for foreign students. J. C. Fernald's "English Grammar Simplified" (Funk & Wagnalls) is lucid and easy to use. The book of this sort easiest to read, however, and most likely to register immediately in one's daily speech, is Fowler's "The King's English" (Oxford University Press), followed by Fowler's "Modern Usage" (Oxford University Press), whose appearance a couple of years ago was greeted with editorials all over England.

Duty and affection combine to make me recommend Allen and Greenough's Latin Grammar, published by Ginn. I haven't seen the new edition. I hope it has the same enticing bits of classic literature, used as examples (with translation) of the rules. There was always the chance, if you looked up the rules properly, that the example might have been taken from that day's portion of your text. A little book, Petitmangin's "Latin Grammar Made Clear" (Funk & Wagnalls) might well be included; a companion volume is the Abbé Dimnet's "French Grammar Made Clear." In his later and more famous "Art of Thinking" he rightly rather resents the tendency to misquote this title as "French Grammar Made Easy." Nothing, he says, can make it easy, but it is possible by clear thinking to get it clear, and that is all a right-minded person should require. Indeed, it has always seemed to me that the best protection a common-school education can give against muddleheadedness is a grounding in grammar and the principle of the equation.

The comparative and general grammar called for is J. O. H. Jesperson's "Philosophy of Grammar" (Holt), which puts into a single large volume the general conclusion the author reached in the course of preparing his great "Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles" (2 vols., Stechert). As for books on the history of languages, they could keep this reader going for years. He might begin with T. R. Lounsbury's "History of the English Language" (Holt), Frank Vizetelly's "Essentials of English Speech" (Funk & Wagnalls), J. C. Nesfield's "English Grammar Past and Present" (Macmillan), H. C. Wyld's "Historical Study of the Mother Tongue" (Dutton), and his "Short History of English" (Dutton). Constant readers will have marked the strain I must have put upon myself not to drag in "Weekley's Etymological Dictionary" (Dutton), the world's best light-reading for hot weather, but I cannot refrain—though it does take me a trifle off my beat—from calling attention to his latest book on words and their use, "Saxo Grammaticus; or, First Aid for the Best Seller," one of the ever-provocative "To-day and To-morrow Series" (Dutton). One should also get Dr. Greig's "Breaking Priscian's Head," an amusing assault on Grammar in the same series. The editors of the series have their doubts that "Saxo Grammaticus" will be able to do much for grammar. "To-morrow's English is rolling in upon us," they say, "as irresistible as the Atlantic. But lovers of our language will valiantly wield their mops to the last."

H. S., New Concord, Ohio, asks if there is a prose translation, suitable for a boy from ten to twelve, of the poem of the Cid.

"THE Story of the Cid," a book for boys published by Lothrop, is adapted from Southey's translation by C. D. Wilson. For older readers, "The Poem of the Cid," translated with introduction and notes by John Ormsby (Stechert), is a reprint of the London 1879 edition, and the University of California publishes "The Lay of the Cid," translated into English verse by R. Selden Rose and Leonard Bacon.

MISS SUSAN McCORMICK of Public School 38, the Bronx, is making a historical study of magazines published in the secondary schools. At present she is searching for any early issues before 1890. After that date she looks for first issues. She will be grateful for information as to where these magazines are to be found. Information concerning articles, books, or reports is of interest to her also. Her address, to which replies should be sent directly, is P. S. 38, Bronx, St. Ann's Avenue, N. Y. Now is your chance to get your old school-paper into the hall of fame. Someone ought to make a list of starlike American names that showed their first twinkle in the "Answers to Puzzles" section of the old *St. Nicholas*.

JOHN D. HANEY, principal of the Edgar Allan Poe School of this city, suggests to G. B., whose letter headed a recent column, "Recreations in Mathematics," by H. E. Licks, published by D. Van Nostrand Company, 8 Warren Street, New York—"which is not a book of games, or magic squares, as its name might imply, but an endeavor to epitomize some of the notions that lie at the bottom of conic sections, the calculus, and certain phases of algebra and geometry, plane and solid. Nor is it 'Mathematics Made Easy' or 'How to Be a Newton in Ten Lessons'!"

A CORRESPONDENT whose letter has been left in my New York desk asks if I can tell him on what facts and by what method "best-sellers" are determined. Who makes the lists and how do they do it? I went at once to Mr. Frederic Melcher, who replies:

THE *Publisher's Weekly* report is the only one that is really national in scope. We have long had relations with about a hundred booksellers over the country who are willing to check up carefully the results of the past month. This is mailed to us on a form and compiled with a system of checkings for the different places. By getting it from the bookstores, we have an indication of what is actually selling, not simply the number of books that have been sent out in quantity, which would be all you could get from a jobber. We also believe that it is better than the publishers' report, as there are certain types of books that naturally go better through jobbers, and then the publisher, too, has his own special enthusiasms. We also think it is better than the library report, because library circulation somewhat differs from the number of copies they have, and book sales do not. Of course, the report from the individual bookseller is still another kind of report and is always good news locally.

"Once a year in our Annual Summary Number we compile the year's record, but this, of course, has to be properly interpreted, as the book that gets started in February has a better chance to climb up through a year than the book which starts in November and divides its success over two years. We haven't found any new way to get around this point. Also, in all records of this kind it is possible that the tally will not actually agree with the numerical sale, which publishers will not give. This is because the sale at one point, let us say, New York, might be numerically far more than the total sale in ten points scattered over the country.

"I give you all these different facts to keep in mind in interpreting these figures, but, after all, the question of actual sales is interesting and important. I remember finding in the introduction to Saintsbury's 'History of English Criticism' a phrase that is something like this, 'After all,' he said, 'it is one thing to know what the public might have read in a certain decade or what they ought to have read from what was available, but a far more substantial basis of facts is a record of what they did read.'"

THE *Cleveland Public Library writes:* "Your publication of our suggestions of novels and plays about dentists in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for May 31st moves our Fiction Division to answer the request in the issue of May 24th for nineteenth century pseudo-scientific writers, from *J. O. B., Chapel Hill, N. C.* The following volumes of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth may be helpful: "Lepidus, the Centurion," and "Phra, the Phœnician," by E. L. L. Arnold; "The Coming Race" and "Zanoni," by E. G. Bulwer-Lytton; "Cæsar's Column," by Ignatius Donnelly; "Etidorhpa, or The End of the Earth," by J. W. Lloyd; "Lilith," by George MacDonald, and "The Purple Cloud," "Lord of the Sea," and "The Yellow Danger," by M. P. Shiel.

The Lee Road Library, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, needs a list of modern pseudo-scientific fiction, the Chapel Hill call being only for earlier works. This gives me a chance to mention Erle Cox's "Out of the Silence" (Henkle), a lost-world story; Norman Matson's remarkable "Doctor Fogg" (Macmillan), a blend of social satire and super-radio; Gawain Edwards's "The Earth Tube" (Appleton), in which the old idea of piercing the globe is featured; John Taine's "The Iron Star" (Dutton), in which evolution works backward, and a thriller—if this sort of thing thrills you—called "The Fatal Kiss Mystery," by Rufus King (Doubleday, Doran). To this might be added the newsstand magazine *Amazing Stories*, to which no less an authority than Edward Shanks lately gave a leading article in the *New Statesman* as a phenomenon deserving of study. He says he has read it with renewed delight every month for the last three years, and there must be at least one other English reader, as when "The War of the Worlds" was reprinted in it this man wrote in to say that the places therein mentioned by Mr. Wells, such as Weybridge, Chobham, and Southbend, really did exist: he had been there and seen them.

C. R. C., Tuscaloosa, Ala., asks for an outline of recent worthwhile American literature; poets and prose writers.

MANLY and Rickert's "Contemporary American Literature" (Harcourt, Brace) has lately been revised and enlarged by Fred B. Millett, and is now become even more useful. It is a combination of book lists, brief biographical sketches, references to magazine articles, and the like, and in the case of certain writers, questions suggesting study. I find myself turning to this and its companion volume, "Contemporary British Literature" (Harcourt, Brace), often enough in the course of my own work to make me believe it would be a fine desk book for the work of others.

A list of longer works on recent American literature, not outlines, would include Louis Untermeyer's "American Poetry Since 1900" (Harcourt, Brace), F. L. Pattee's "Development of the American Short Story" (Harper), P. H. Boynton's "Some Contemporary Americans" and "More Contemporary Americans" (University of Chicago Press), Carl and Mark Van Doren's "American and British Literature since 1900" (Century), John A. Macy's "The Spirit of American Literature" (Modern Library), Carl Van Doren's "The American Novel" and "Contemporary American Novelists" (Macmillan), and the two volumes of Henry Seidel Canby's "Definitions" (Harcourt, Brace).

CONFESSIONS OF ZENO
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"It is extremely ironic. There is a constant succession of comic or entertaining inventions. Also I have never seen more amusing and mischievous illustrations of the adjustments of conscience by which sinners are enabled to continue respecting themselves." FRANK SWINNERTON in *The Evening News (London).* $3.00

THE LIFE AND MIND OF EMILY DICKINSON
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"A magnificent book. one of the finest biographies of recent years. It will occupy an important place in American literary history." MAX EASTMAN $4.00

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The New Books

Juvenile

(*Continued from page* 12)

down to the national period. This fact gives the whole volume an old-fashioned air which the old cuts and plates with which it is liberally illustrated harmonize. Most youngsters of today are probably more keenly interested in events in the United States since 1860 than in the events of colonial life. But Mr. Coffman has, if we accept his design, performed his task fairly well. The book is of course in no sense a history, being simply a series of historical sketches. But these sketches are written with vigor and color, while some of them are conspicuous for their honesty. It is made plain that the Tories were an honest and respectable group of men, and a little later the young reader is carefully instructed that "most Southern masters were fairly kind to their slaves." As is proper in a volume for elementary consumption, great emphasis is laid on the history of outstanding personalities, and such men as Franklin, Washington, and Lincoln are treated at length. It is a thoroughly healthful and useful book. Its paragraph on the horrors and waste of the World War, and its word in behalf of the League of Nations, are worth special commendation.

Miscellaneous

HISTORY OF COOPERATIVE NEWS-GATHERING IN THE UNITED STATES. By VICTOR ROSEWATER. Appleton. 1930. $3.50.

No hint of the dramatic character of this scholarly but far from dry-as-dust volume is conveyed by its sober title. Toward the end of his long and animated story the author speaks of "passing in review the successive advances from rowboat to radio"; those last four words outline the picture. The first innovation in the gathering of news in this country was made in 1811 by Samuel Topliff, Jr., a youth of twenty-two, who, being placed in charge of the "Marine and General News Book"—not a newspaper, but a book in which was posted the latest information obtained from incoming vessels and which was available at the Exchange Coffee House in Boston—signalized his change of occupation from sailor to clerk by the unsensational but momentous stroke of hiring a rowboat with which to meet arriving ships instead of wait for them to come in. This step, although provoking no rivalry at the time, was prophetic. Twenty years later there was something like a newspaper-boat war in New York. Topliff's little craft was a symbol of the keen competition for gathering and publishing the news which was not only to spur individual newspapers but to create huge press organizations and send them into costly struggles for supremacy.

Those organizations and their struggles—struggles with natural difficulties as well as with one another—are the subject of Mr. Rosewater's pages. The first organization was formed in New York in 1847, but the next year it was merged with a much more important one which bore the name Associated Press and which was dominant despite opposition for nearly fifty years. The present organization of the same name is an outgrowth of a vigorous rival, the Western Associated Press. The complicated history of all these organizations, including the old United Press and the one now flourishing, is set forth by Mr. Rosewater with conscientious accuracy and scrupulous fairness. His book is an invaluable contribution to the history of American journalism.

Philosophy

ESSAYS IN PHILSOPHY. Edited by *T. V. Smith* and *W. K. Wright*. Open Court. $3.50.

THE ETHICS OF THE SHULHAN 'ARUK. By *Dr. Itzehak Spector*. Tacoma, Wash.: Wraitha Publishing Co. 1930.

SEFER HA-'IKKARIM. Book of Principles. By *Joseph Albo*. Translated by *Isaac Husiks*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America.

SOME LIVING ISSUES. By *Robert E. Speer*. Revell. 1930. $2.50.

THE DANGERS OF OBEDIENCE. By *Harold J. Laski*. Harper. $3.

THE REVOLT AGAINST DUALISM. By *Arthur O. Lovejoy*. Dutton. $4.

A CALENDAR OF DOUBTS AND FAITHS. By *William Marias Malisoff*. New York: G. Howard Watt. $2.50.

THE PSYCHOLOGIST KEEPS HOUSE. By *Edwina Abbott Cowan* and *Laura Thornborough*. Minneapolis, Minn. $2.

CHILD ADJUSTMENT IN RELATION TO GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT. By *Annie Dolman Inskeep*. Appleton. $3.

PILOTING YOUR LIFE. By *Joseph Jastrow*. Greenberg. $3.50.

Religion

A COLLEGE MAN'S RELIGION. E. M. WAITS. Stafford Lowdon. 1930. $2.

The title of this book raises hopes which its contents do not satisfy. One might expect a symposium at worst or at best the log of a curiosity tour through American colleges with a view to finding what the horn-rimmed generation thinks, if it thinks at all, about religion. Unluckily, though, we have here a series of sermons and addresses. The first one has to do with the Apostle Paul, whom the author presents as a college man of early days, and hence the title. Mr. Waits is President of the Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, a school as redoubtable in its football strength as Southern Methodist. If his sermons are not particularly rich in contemporary interest they are at least sprinkled with good humor and served in a winsome manner. It is easy to believe that freshmen and upperclassmen would listen to them willingly enough but it is hard to believe that an older group of graduates would take the pains to read them. They do not, on the whole, express a college man's religion any more than they express a banker's.

AN HOUR ON CHRISTIANITY. By LLEWELYN POWYS. Lippincott. 1930. $1.

Beautiful prose and plain-spoken prejudices do not make fair history. Mr. Powys is the observant novelist in a difficult rôle of historian. But he does not have the historian's sympathy with variant positions. The charm of his book is that it is not "church history"; it is "What Mr. Powys Thinks about Religion in General and Christianity in Particular."

For one who knows his "church history" this book should prove irritating and therefore stimulating. For any others, as an introduction to the subject, it is misleading.

The surprising feature is its high estimate of Jesus. Most of the time Mr. Powys is laying about him most disrespectfully. But to Jesus he pays continual tribute. "No man has been less blinkered than Jesus, less spiritually blindfold" . . . Jesus "not for a moment lost the integrity of his inner being."

THE SPIRIT OF GOD AND THE FAITH OF TODAY. By *Richard Roberts*. Chicago: Willett, Clark & Colby. $2.

THE COLLEGE STUDENT THINKING IT THROUGH. By *Jessie A. Charters*. Abingdon Press. $1.50.

CREATIVE PREACHING. A Series of Lectures Delivered before the Boston University School of Theology, October, 1929. Abingdon Press. $2.50.

THE BIBLE IN MY EVERYDAY LIFE. By *Eugene Franklin Reese*. System Bible Co.

WORD PICTURES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By *Archibald Thomas Robertson*. Vol. II. Richard R. Smith. $3.50.

THE GOODLY FELLOWSHIP OF THE PROPHETS. By *W. Mackintosh Mackay*. Richard R. Smith. $2.

JESUS AND THE LAWS OF MOSES. By *Bennett Harvie Branscomb*. Richard R. Smith. $2.50.

LITTLE BOY OF NAZARETH. By *Edna Madison Bonses*. Richard R. Smith. $2.50.

VENTURES IN BELIEF. Edited by *Henry P. Van Dusen*. Scribners. $2.

WHAT'S LIFE ALL ABOUT? By *Bertha Condé*. Scribners. $2.

THE PREACHER AND POLITICS. By *W. Wofford T. Duncan*. Abingdon. $1.25.

ORPHEUS. By *Solomon Reinach*. Liveright. $5.

RELIGION IN THE AMERICAN COLLEGE. By *Edward Sterling Boyer*. Abingdon. $1.25.

PERPETUATING PENTECOST. By *John M. Vertug*. Willett, Clark & Colby. $2.

PRE-EXISTENCE AND REINCARNATION. By *Wincenty Lutoslawski*. London: Allen & Unwin.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING. By *Ernest Fremont Tittle*. Holt. $2.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE. By *William Manson*. Richard R. Smith. $3.50.

WITH CHRIST AS GUIDE. By *A. Herbert Gray*. Richard R. Smith. $1.50.

WILL INDIA BECOME CHRISTIAN? By *J. W. R. Netram*. Richard R. Smith. $1.50 net.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF ADULTS. By *Benjamin S. Winchester*. Richard R. Smith. $1.50.

WHAT IF HE CAME. By *Garfield Hodder Williams*. Richard R. Smith. $2.

IF I WERE GOD. By *William J. Robinson*. Freethought Press Association.

CAN THESE BONES LIVE? By *J. Worsley Boder*. Smith.

THE PURPOSE OF JESUS. By *Campbell N. Moody*. $1.50 net.

ST. AUGUSTINE. By *Eleanor McDougal*. Smith. $1.50.

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS. By *Bertram Lee Woolf*. Smith. $2.50 net.

THE REAL MEANING OF GENESIS. By *David A. Murray*. Stratford. $3.

THE DRAMA OF LIFE. By *F. F. Lewis*. Stratford. $2.50.

SELF-REALIZATION. By *Edmond Holmes*. Smith.

THE BUDDHA'S GOLDEN PATH. By *Dwight Goddard*. London: Luzac.

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Protest of an Old Timer

By JOHN BENNETT

THE world of books and graphic arts is suffering from a mania, the basis of which is either ignorance or conscious fraud, yet may be only extreme ill taste.

We are over-run with decorative designs and illustrations which are simply devilishly crude and damnably ugly, which mar a book by their obnoxious presence; by so-called "wood-block designs" so foreign to the real genius of the wood-block, and remote from the intention and soul of a book as to resemble a bull in a china shop.

Set the dealer in prints aside, to expiate his own sin.

Of course the "wood-block design" is not the only offender; the offense has many forms.

Anything which looks strange to the young editor and publisher, or different from anything he has seen before, puzzles him and deludes him, or persuades him, being shrewd, into thinking that the foolish public may be diddled again by bunkum and claptrap. And in nine cases out of ten he is right, absolutely right. There is, in the United States, a vast, uninformed mass of readers and buyers who hardly know their right hands from their left in the matter of illustration and decorative design, and may be seduced by the loud reëchoing blurb and by a fancy brand on the bottle: "From wood-block by Noodleby," "Decorative designs by Catchboobski," or "A Book without Sense, by Ferenc Dumkopf." And the more strange and foreign the design and the designer the more impressive does the fraud appear to the innocent and the easy, just as a variant cologne-water or essence attracts a richer and more deeply parvenu trade if one label it "*parfum*." Gods of our fathers, if there be such curious divinity, what fools we mortals be!

Anything will do for an illustration, whether it illustrates or not: it may be a figure-piece more nearly resembling a rickety clothes-horse, or a load of grass in a gale, houses which tilt and topple defiant of all perspective or gravity, cock-eyed women, smear-faced men, scare-crow drawings, and aimless meanderings of a floral sort which have no more connection with the text or intention of the book than this piece has with the paintings of Fra Lippo Lippi or Fragonard.

In representational art we are fallen to the dogs: as silly as school boys of ten, to whom any distorted face upon a fence does duty for humor or portraiture; we have paraded as caricaturists men whose sole claim to distinction is that they draw things grotesquely inhuman, mockingly ugly and irrational; and editors print them, believing them humorous. Humorous? My god!

It may be alleged by those irritated by these comments—if any are—that I, myself, have done bad humorous drawings. I am sorry that editors printed any drawings of mine which had no claim to genuine humor and relied alone upon ugliness for point. But I do not think my own work eminently great; my drawings have their merit in their place; and I am well aware of several faults, but I love and appreciate good work done by other men, better draftsmen far more entitled to the name of artist than I am. That is one of the pains of appreciation: to know and to admire the fine work of other men far more than one may his own. I am happy to say that I do. I have in my own way done what I might within my limitations, and am subject to all criticism.

But I miss from books and magazines drawings of distinction and true graphic art. I do not mean photographic realism and meticulous representationism; but illustrations and drawings which illuminate the accompanying text, if presented with text; or add a visual richness to any mental presentation of an idea, be it simply an ornamental head- or tail-piece, a border, or small cut printed in the text.

But to put an ornament, or a so-called ornamental border upon a page, inappropriate in every way, and to present it as an added attraction, an increment of happy value, to offer as illustration pages of shocking stuff, miserably conceived and worse performed, and without one iota of illumination, rather offending, by misrepresentation and distortion, all sense of attributive humanity, passes all sense, and almost passes decency: it is a cheat, an indecency, and a fraud: some know it, but think it smart; some do not know, but hope to be thought knowing and "informed"; some do it because the rest have done it; so the vicious circle goes.

"Peasant art" is bad enough; yet a false peasant art has vast popularity; men who apparently can actually draw well, draw coarsely and ill to go down to the popular level of the millions who follow avidly the so-styled *humorous strips*; others, who cannot draw at all, suffice in ugliness to amuse the school-child intellect of what Mr. Mencken labels the bourgeoisie and booberie—terms which include many levels of American society.

But that there should be few truly good illustrations, few truly good decorations upon the printed page, only mad rot and bunkum, is a sore thing to some few ancients like myself, who long for a return of reasonableness.

It is quite true that a madman may be a brilliant artist; several whom the world acclaims have been mad as hatters; but to make mad drawings does not make an artist of a dauber and a dub, nor make his product excellent.

To make careless, intentional, insane, grotesquely distorted figures and objects, to twist the world awry and upset the arrangement of the heavens, to pretend to be an African Bushman, for the sake of being "primitive," and to foist off so-called "primitive art" in the most unfit and inopportune places, is to throw a pot of paint into the faces of a still-surviving few who admired James McNeill Whistler and enjoyed his gay battle with John Ruskin; who love the indigenous arts of the Maori, in their own right place, and the beauty of the Persian, the native genius of Chinese and Japanese arts and crafts in the places where Oriental arts and crafts are fitting and true. These last are fine, not primitive arts.

The primitive arts of primitive people, as practiced by themselves, are perennial delights; the fraudulent imitation of primitive arts by sophisticated races is damned folly and fraud, except as a primitive art may be a guide to simplicity; otherwise such performance is obnoxious in the extreme.

What I think upon this matter will make little or no difference to editors and publishers; but I have been pushed against a dirty wall, scrawled with schoolboy designs and faces, and inscribed with schoolboy brightness; and I protest against a flood of inanity and ineptness being presented as "art" and "illustration" and "decorative design." Hokum!

The poor "damned public" will run after anything which makes noise enough and paints its wagons yellow and red, and harnesses a painted zebra, and calls it a "unicorn."

There was, thirty-five years or so ago, in some literary and publishing circles of New York, a society called "The Roaring Lions," founded by that quiet and greatly talented fellow, my old friend, Tudor Jenks, requisites to membership in which were these, that one should not be "a lion," and if, by unavoidable circumstance, one were compelled to be a lion, that he should roar as little as possible.

The society of Unicorns, which, I understand, some gentle jester has organized, has another tenet; since it is physically impossible for any unicorn to wind his own horn, each and every unicorn secures the services of a brother unicorn who blows his horn for him, in return for a like favor; thus there is maintained a continuous and systematic horn-blowing among unicorns.

There would appear to be some such arrangement of mutual and systematic horn-blowing among the critical and creative parts of the artistic world—that is, the illustrative and literary producers of the metropolis—which a good friend of mine will insist on calling "the metrollopus."

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For I perceive men who, by their very speech, know nothing whatever of the problems and processes of graphic art, voicing erudite opinions and praise of most indifferent wares, with as suave and self-complacent an air as if to appreciate graphic art in its every branch and to talk of it wisely were simple as saying one's A B C.

Similarly, children who have not yet experienced enough of life to form a wise opinion of it, are ready to expound the purposes of literature and humanity, and to approve the most bastard forms of illustration as if they personally had long weighed the full achievements of the past, and rejecting the dross and the grosser particles of earth, had retained in their minds the richest siftings of the authentic metal, and presented to their hearers nought but the golden grain. Yet faced with actual demonstrations of graphic art in its simplest illustrative form, black-and-white, for use in books and magazines, for itself as beauty, or as illustration, and illumination, or explanation of a text, their judgment is utterly at fault, and the world of books is flooded with abortive efforts at "originality" and at "primitiveness" and "the expression of personality" when the personality so expressed is feeble and ineffectual, unbalanced and uninformed, inappropriate and unbeautiful, and the "originality" is only a difference from all precedent, found as when one ditches his car.

I am not angry about it. In my own youth, perhaps later—youth is after all, a comparative term—I was, and have been, very many kinds of a fool. It is the high privilege of youth to be self-confident, conceited, and quite mistaken. Without doubt I, too, exercised these privileges to the full in my own time.

But I am grown impatient that so long this foolish search for novelty, for anything, anything, just so it be "different" from any previously accepted creative effort, should be put upon the purchaser of books and prints.

A plain text is better than bastard decoration, unwisely applied, and conceived in ignorance of what truly constitutes beauty, humorous grotesquery, ironic caricature, or primitive simplicity.

It is bad enough in its own way to see the pages of reviews disfigured by the creation and revival of monstrosities of type for the sake of black-faced words, screaming or bawling, so loudly as to compel attention to the offered wares, like so many barkers in an old-fashioned street fair or circus-ground, purveying "Circassian beauties" from Mott street, and "Tattooed men," daily painted in the dressing-tent, or like the loud-mouthed vendors of nostrums on street corners in country towns on stock-sale days a half-century ago.

Type forms forgotten and thrown into limbo seventy-five years ago for their vicious disregard of proportion and creative worth, have been restruck, and splash the page like a shipping clerk's reckless daubings. Type forms which had wisely been forgotten by a more sensitive realm of printers, and were to be found surviving only in the pages of dead publications of mid-Victorian days, or in the street signs of British Hong Kong in all their deformity . . . have been dragged out of their tombs and paraded as a new method of soliciting attention by their very outrageousness and difference from the moderation of a well-designed type-face.

These things are the substance of my protest, and I am catholic in my likings. I appeal—no doubt in vain—against this era of the outrageous and ugly presented and proclaimed as worthy examples of graphic and typographic art.

Men seem to be content to be damn fools in order simply to be different. In writing thus I may, myself, be a damned fool; but it is not just to be different.

I should have been either a farmer or a carpenter, in both which occupations I have proved skill and sense; but fate, over which I had little dominion, made me something of a draftsman, something of a writer, and not so much of either as I could well wish. But the long observation of one who was many years a printer, a newspaperman, and a manufacturer of patent medicine cuts,—sixty years of observation, estimation, acceptance, and rejection,—persuades me that the young and uninformed are often both cock-sure and mistaken; and it is a pity that we who are, perhaps, deemed by younger generations moribund old-timers, should have little consideration paid to our appreciations and tastes.

To escape from listlessness, monotony, and lifelessness, we have leaped at times into madness and folly. I know that the pendulum will swing back again to some happier medium; I perceive that it has already begun to swing, and that, also, there are still to be found here and there hidden, creative pendulums of typography and graphic art that have never swerved from the steady beat of admirable production. But since life grows short, I have sometimes, as herein, grown impatient with inelegance and crudity paraded wilfully or honestly as a pleasure to the eye.

Let the few old-timers like myself, before we pass out, have things well done and worthwhile to look at, and somewhat diminish the roaring flood of bastard graphic art, whose examples wash up on the tide of publication like empty bottles, grape-fruit rinds, and decaying remains of rejected life along the New Jersey shore, washed up from the New York barge-dump off the coast.

I reproach the beautiful and proud city of New York with this;—that it barge-dumps the United States with its fruit-rinds, empty bottles, broken crates, and putrescent rejected life, and too often presents it as an added attraction to the mental seabeach of the nation, and not as a desecration and a detriment to joy.

For this I hold the great City guilty, and its undoubted might misused; or, if not the very City itself, by some figure of speech, some metonymy or synecdoche, I forget which, that for the sake of vivacity presents the part for the whole, or the container for the thing contained. If the suspicion be in error, pardon it for my cause.

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YOUTH DARES ALL

(ANONYMOUS)

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ERNEST HEMMINGWAY has written an introduction to *Kiki's* Memoirs which *Edward W. Titus*, at the sign of the Black Manikin, 4, Rue Delambre, Montparnasse, has just brought out in Paris. There are full page reproductions of twenty paintings by Kiki, as well as photographs and portraits of her by Man Ray, Per Krogh, Hermine David, etc. The price of the book is five dollars, one guinea, or one hundred and twenty-five francs. Kiki is the complete child of nature as well as the queen of Montparnasse. Her writing is entirely straightforward. One likes her. Also her drawing is quite good and her painting mustn't have been so bad. . . .

We look *toward* Horace Liveright and wish him *bon voyage* to Hollywood. . . .

In August the Macaulay Company will publish "The Erl King," by *Edwin Granberry*, who will be remembered as the author of "Strangers and Lovers," a book that recently had considerable success in England following its publication here. Granberry will soon make a name for himself. . . .

The title of *Siegfried Sassoon's* new novel has been changed from "The Diary of an Infantry Officer" to "Memoirs of an Infantry Officer." It is announced for October publication by Coward-McCann. . . .

Harcourt, Brace recently received the following letter:

Gentlemen:

I would appreciate it very much if you would be good enough to give me some information regarding the book, "Orlando," by *Virginia Woolf*. It is rather bewildering to me that this book, which is claimed as being a biography, contains so many apparently fictitious facts, such as Orlando's living several hundred years, and her changing of sex at the late age of thirty, before which she had already had sexual experiences. If you could clear up some of these facts for me I would be truly grateful.

* * *

We are still receiving those State rhymes. But the last batch is too terrible to print. We thank our kind friends for sending them in—but, Oh, dear! The best one, just about—and that's certainly not saying much—is this, from West Grove, Pennsylvania:

A place hard to rhyme's Louisiana;
But I know a girl there—Susie Hannah;
She has strawberry hair,
And green eyes. I don't care;
For she's peerless along the savannah.

* * *

The Dodd, Mead list for this Fall is reduced twenty-five per cent, an example of the way a good many publishers are cutting down. . . .

Covici, Friede has now brought out a new one-volume edition of *Frank Harris's* biography of *Oscar Wilde* in which is a lengthy letter written to Harris and printed for the first time from *Lord Alfred Douglas*. The letter explains the circumstances that brought a two-year sentence in Reading Gaol to Wilde. . . .

There will be a new novel in woodcuts by *Lynd Ward*. It will be brought out by Cape & Smith for the Christmas season. Following upon "God's Man" it is entitled "Mad Man's Drum," the words having probably come from Oscar Wilde's "The Ballad of Reading Gaol." It will be about the same length as "God's Man," and will be entirely composed of pictures, like the former book, without any text whatever. . . .

Our attention has been called to the Literary Center Restaurant, which is located at 37 West 49th Street. So now we know where the literary centre of New York is, and the dinner is only 85 cents. . . .

Margaret Thomson Raymond's "Linnet on the Threshold" (Longmans, Green) is the story of a fifteen-year-old girl who got a job in a department store. The author has now received a letter from a group of girl scouts saying that they have all decided to get jobs at once. That certainly is exerting influence! . . .

We hear on the very best authority that "This Day and Time," by *Anne W. Armstrong*, published by Alfred A. Knopf, is an excellent novel, presenting a remarkable woman character against the background of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Tennessee. . . .

Winston Churchill has recently been dividing his time between speechmaking (naturally), painting (at which he is an accomplished amateur), laying bricks for a wall around his estate, and writing his memoirs, which as yet have no title, but will be published in the fall by Charles Scribner's Sons. . . .

As for a rhyme to Wisconsin, *Thomas L. Stix* of the Book League of America batted this out for us recently:

Out in Wisconsin
Each Red just romps in
So they say
On each election day.
Dismay!
Koehler of Koehler
Sits alone
Upon his pure white throne
While each Lafollette
Just bides his day.

Mr. Stix admits that at least two things that are better have been written since "Paradise Lost." . . .

We have recently received from England a copy of *The Matrimonial Post and Fashionable Marriage Advertiser*, which says it is the Matrimonal Agency of the Civilized World. This paper has been running for seventy years and is no joke. "All classes of the public are catered for." Though a good many bachelors and widowers advertise in this journal, the great preponderance of ads is from spinsters. And some of them struck us as quite attractive. For instance, this strikes us as fair enough

Spinster, age 26, height 5 ft. 6 in., Protestant, fair complexion, dark hair, medium figure, dressmaker in London, reserved, fond of music, theatres, books, and home life, wishes to meet a Man of good appearance, age about 35, tall, affectionate, earning about £5 per week.

Among the testimonials, however, on page 6 of *The Matrimonial Post*, we were rather daunted by the one that ran as follows:

Please temporarily refrain from submitting my name to any more of your clients, as I am in correspondence with many ladies, and cannot keep pace with them.

Lots of facilities are offered, however. For instance:

Society Ladies and Gentlemen (Army and Navy Officers, Clergymen, &c.) can be introduced to each other without one side at least knowing anything about this Agency, which is generally advantageous to above. The introductions take place at the houses of well-known London people, with whom I am in touch. I have recently brought about several Society introductions which resulted in weddings, and either one or other of the parties did not know I had anything to do with it. Particulars on application.

* * *

Five American etchings by *A. Hugh Fisher*, A. R. E., the English etcher and poet who recently visited this country, are published by The Print Corner, Hingham Center, Massachusetts, and we can heartily recommend them to collectors. The subjects are The Equitable Building, New York; the White Church, Hingham; Old Tree, Hingham; Hingham Willows, and Louisburg Square. The highest price for one of these etchings is fifteen dollars. . . .

Emil Ludwig is sitting for his bust to *George Fite Waters*, the sculptor of the latest bust of Ludwig's biographical subject—*Abraham Lincoln*. . . .

And here comes our old friend *Homer M. Parsons* of San Bernardino to the rescue just as we thought we should never be able to vamp out this column in the silly season. He sends us the following great thoughts:

I object. When *Louis Untermeyer* found rhymes for all those unrhymable states he used up all there was, and there isn't any more. But oh, the infinite variety of combinations in analyzed rhyme, where the bard is in such a state that no state is barred.

In analyzed rhyme it looks as
Easy as pie! One guess sets
The unistellular Texas
Hard against Massachusetts.

And oh, how canny, how canny a
Partner for Mississippi:
Couple her with Virginia—
And wouldn't that make you happy?

Now, can a sense of duty cut
Out the survivor? Never!
Join the parade, Connecticut,
And wiggle your ears for Hoover!

Yours truly,
THE PHŒNICIAN.

The AMEN CORNER

Vincent Starrett wrote, "In a big place like the world one likes *little* things." In baronial libraries we recall that we have gone along the shelves first seeking out the *little books*. There is a coziness about them, a snugness to the hand, that is especially companionable. And we have made quite a collection of small editions of great books. Of these, our choice is *The World's Classics*. Their physical charm and editorial excellence are worthy of their interesting titles. Among "the great novels of all time," listed by Professor W. H. E. Lamont in the New New York Herald Tribune the other day were the following:[1] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice;* C. Brontë, *Jane Eyre;* E. Brontë, *Wuthering Heights;* Thackeray, *Henry Esmond;* Dickens, *Great Expectations;* Hawthorne, *Scarlet Letter;* Melville, *Moby Dick;* Eliot, *Adam Bede;* Tolstoy, *War and Peace*,[2] and *Anna Karenina*.[3] These are some of the most interesting novels ever written and at eighty cents they are cheaper to buy than the widely advertised Dollar Novels, and to our eyes make far pleasanter footage on the book shelves.

But the prime purpose of small books, we suppose, is convenience to travellers. Certainly we can't imagine better train entertainment than Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*, *Stories of Crime and Detection*, William Meinhold's *The Amber Witch*, or Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, Montaigne's *Essays*, or—well, you may as well send to the Oxford University Press, 114 Fifth Avenue, New York City, for the attractive list of over 375 *World's Classics* titles. One of these little volumes should be in the pocket of all holiday makers. A wise golfer could calm his nerves and enjoy the otherwise irritating delays on the over-crowded summer courses with a supply of them tucked in his golf-bag.

* * *

Ahoy! to you who are missing the fun of a one-man yacht for fear of heavy expenses. Mr. C. E. Tyrrell Lewis's new *Handyman's Yacht Book*[4] will persuade you that yachting is not a pastime for the rich alone. The book deals only with the small yacht, the craft that a man can handle alone, and with every subject likely to be useful in connection with its purchase and upkeep. It contains fifty illustrations and a foreword by Lieut.-Commander E. S. Martin. Sir Allen Moore's *Last Days of Mast and Sail* also will prove splendid reading to the ship-minded.

* * *

"Zero Hour! Gray columns of smoke stalked forward like a row of trees set in motion by some magic power. The ground became alive with men." Do you remember that scene, or haven't you yet read R. Stuart Wortley's magnificent account of aviation in the war, "*Letters from a Flying Officer*."[5] If flying thrills you, or fighting, or accounts of strategy or courage or sportsmanship, read this book!

* * *

"One of the finest books on tennis," said an old-time champ to us not long ago, "is Noel and Clark's *History of Tennis*."[6]

"Every traveller to North Italy should read MacIver's *Etruscans*.[7] His *Iron Age of Italy*[8] has been described as "one of the most outstanding contributions ever made to the archæology of an area."

A very interesting document of the Christian Church and its hatred for its enemy is Gollancz's *Julian the Apostate*.[9]

Dr. J. Stephenson's work on *The Oligochaeta*[10] deals with worms up to eleven feet in length.

It has been reported that a Sunday school teacher read "Where Love Is, God Is" to the children in his class. They were eager to read the other stories in the volume (World's Classics edition of Tolstoy's *Twenty-Three Tales*[11]), and the book was lent to them. When it was returned it was found that it had "gone round the whole village and been read by every family, parents as well as children, and been the subject of much talk or discussion."

A book primarily for the layman who yearns to form some ideas of the tendencies of modern science, but does not wish to devote more than a single evening to the gratification of this desire, is Buckingham's *Matter and Radiation*.[12] Without using mathematics, the author has tried to put in words of one syllable, so to speak, the whole story of the development of modern physics, within the space of less than 150 pages. The book has real merit and real usefulness.

—THE OXONIAN.

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